the Freeman

Ideas on Liberty

OCTOBER 1968

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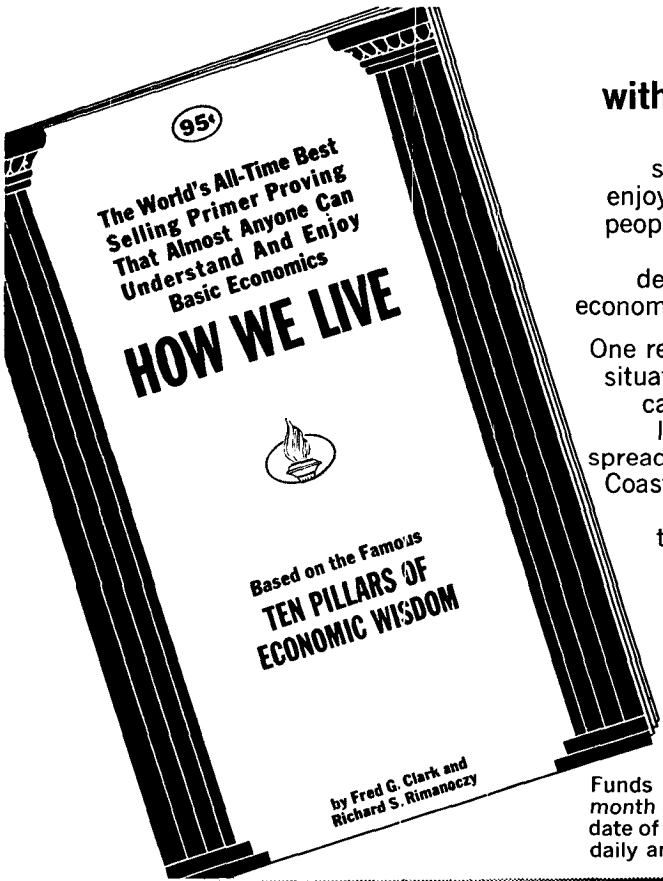
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VOL. 18, NO. 10 • OCTOBER 1968

Gold and the Failure of the "Sorcerers" — Alvaro C. Alsogaray — 579
Argentina's Ambassador discusses the function of gold and the malfunction of various schemes of money manipulation.

The Threat of Wage and Price Controls — Emerson P. Schmidt — 587
Recounting U. S. experiences under price control during and following World War II.

Recipe for Failure — Paul L. Poirot — 592
Training the hard-core unemployed to earn by serving cannot be done under a system that pays them not to work.

The Public Be Damned — Milton Friedman — 601
A businessman might have said it, but only a bureaucrat can get away with it.

Education in America:
1. What Has Happened? — George Charles Roche III — 603
Introducing a series concerning the American ideals of higher education, the departures therefrom, and the prospects for recovery.

Leaving the Problem to Others — Ben H. Carpenter — 611
A business leader surveys the national and world scene and suggests ways in which individuals may help to improve it.

The Rise and Fall of England:
8. Pax Britannica — Clarence B. Carson — 624
The British contributions during a century largely characterized by world peace and human progress.

Let's Justify Freedom — Larry Arnhart — 636
Not the welfare state but the free economy is the key to justice in human affairs.

Each on His Own White Charger — Earl Zarbin — 639
The futility of looking for a leader to do what can only be done by oneself.

Anyone wishing to communicate with authors may send first-class mail in care of THE FREEMAN for forwarding.

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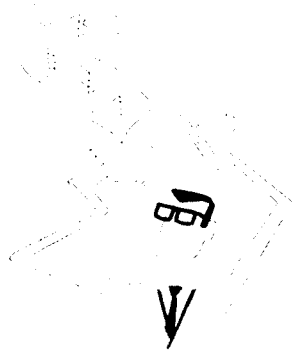
ALVARO C. ALSOGARAY

GOLD AND THE FAILURE OF THE "SORCERERS"



IN 1965 as I was traveling from Tokyo to Paris I had to stop over in Bangkok because of the Indo-Pakistan War which had just broken out. I went to the offices of Pan American Airways to change my itinerary since the one I had, via Calcutta and New Delhi, was cut off. An American woman was talking at that moment with the representative of the company. She was asking that her flight to Calcutta be confirmed for the following morning. "I am very sorry, madam, but for obvious reasons our planes cannot land there," answered the employee. "Yes, but I bought my ticket and I want to go to Calcutta," insisted the lady. The employee, believing that he had not made himself clear, repeated, "But, madam, war has been declared and it is impossible to cross that territory." To which the lady replied imperturbably, "It is not my problem if there is a war; I bought my ticket in the United States, your company agreed to take me to certain places, and therefore you must make arrangements for me to be in Calcutta tomorrow morning." The conversation continued in that vein for almost an hour. Finally, the employee, on the verge of despair, asked the traveler, "Madam, is what you have to do in Calcutta

Mr. Alsogaray, Ambassador to the United States from Argentina, wrote this article in March, 1968. It expresses his concern over the gold problem and the meetings at that time in Stockholm and Washington.

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so important?" To which she replied, "I have nothing to do there but I bought my ticket in the United States and you should stand behind your company." This is a superlative expression of the faith of the United States citizen in the value of commitments and of the social order prevailing in his country.

A few days ago when the bank holiday was decreed in the principal countries of Europe as a result of the gold race, United States tourists in some places had to face a different situation but one that was connected with the same problem. There was no war but, in the hotels, shops, and even the banks, American dollars were not accepted except in very small amounts. If it had occurred to one of those tourists to argue that the gross national product of the United States is more than $800 billion and that the United States' potential and resources are practically incalculable, probably the clerk would have shrugged his shoulders and answered that in any case he was not prepared to change more than a few dollars.

In Argentina these small-great dramas are very familiar to us. There were times when the Argentine peso, our national currency – once one of the hardest and most stable currencies in the world – was not accepted anywhere, or else brought only a fraction of its official value. Besides, each time a devaluation was to take place, we saw closed banks and a reluctance to change foreign currencies for pesos. We are also aware of the nature and ultimate reason for these phenomena: a lack of faith which is the malady that afflicts even powerful nations today.

Modern "Sorcerers"

The loss of confidence and with it the alteration or failure of an established order does not come about as a result of unforeseen factors or of natural castastrophes. Nor is it a punishment from the gods. It simply results from mistakes in human behavior, nearly always inspired by a new class of politicians and "experts" in economy which might well be termed modern "sorcerers." Like the alchemists of old and like Goethe's Faust, these manipulators of the economy of the twentieth century believe in miracles and promise happiness to the common man without requiring from him anything other than that he demand it vehemently from his government. He is assured, besides, that by means of a divine breath called "development" they can transform printed paper into large hydroelectric presses, steel plants, atomic plants, and all kinds

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of goods that they will distribute according to an elevated "social justice." In short, that they have discovered the modern philosopher's stone!

In Argentina some of these "sorcerers" even had official status. There was a government that announced a grand development plan and the head of that government said publicly: "I have so much gold in the Mint that I cannot even walk in the corridors." And as for carrying out the plan, "why worry about money because one could always make use of Miranda's 'magic wand' to get all one needed." When matters did not go very well, the "sorcerers" lost their official designation but continued to function disguised under such other names as "developmentists," "managerial planners," "men gifted with a great social conscience," or simply "experts" in economy. For twenty years they managed the country directly or indirectly by means of bureaucratic measures more or less severe according to the times, but always aimed at preventing the free play of individual initiative and energies.

The magic formula of the "sorcerers" in Argentina – and in all parts of the world – consists in promising the man in the street a better life and at the same time robbing him of part of the fruits of his labor in order that a few (the first to appear) may benefit from that advantage. Everything goes very well at first while the presumed beneficiaries as well as those who are forced to contribute are unaware of the fraud; but finally the system fails and the fraud is out in the open. Except, that it is then too late and the consequences are already irreparable. The "sorcerers" who brought them about disappear from the scene or are expelled from it, but their place is soon taken by others of the same ilk.

In Argentina, in less than a quarter of a century, the "sorcerers" were able to downgrade the currency by more than 99 per cent and to transform a potentially rich country, full of possibilities, into a comparatively underdeveloped one.

The Gold Crisis

This story is applicable to the present crisis in the international monetary system and the race for gold. The common man, and not just the speculators and hoarders, has begun to lose faith in the currency of the most powerful country in the world and of the monetary system created by the "experts" to by-pass the rigid discipline imposed by gold. The new system was an attempt to replace that discipline by a voluntary and

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conscious discipline to be put into practice by politicians and "experts" in economy.

For many years, that anonymous common man, who constitutes the basic cell of human societies, did not notice that his leaders did not adjust to that new discipline and that they allowed the modern "sorcerers" to direct the course of the economic processes by means of equations and statistical indices. Then some of those men, who make up the vast majority of the people everywhere in the world, began to realize what was happening. They tried to escape from the ills they felt instinctively were approaching, by buying gold. Then the whole complex system devised as a substitute for the order imposed by gold underwent such a shake-up that everyone was obliged to accept the truth: that printed paper no longer had the value the governments said it had. Today, those who worked and saved can no longer buy the same amount of gold they could yesterday. Soon, if heroic measures are not taken, they will no longer be able to buy ordinary goods at former prices. Overnight, a good portion of the fruit of their labors has evaporated.

Confusion Among the "Sorcerers"

The "sorcerers" cannot understand why all their complicated scaffolding has fallen about them. For many years they asserted that "the new economic science" had found a way to manage the economy with more finesse and that the crises of the past could not be repeated. They were now in control over the "blind and irrational" forces that unleashed such crises. Their methods, all of them based on subtle ways of restraining the economic freedom of the individual and substituting for the latter the intelligent decisions of high government officials, would prevent the recurrence of the old problems. Having discovered new ways of choking freedom, they felt secure in their position of disguised dictators. Today, they cannot understand what is happening to them.

What these "sorcerers" did not know is the big secret, as old as humanity, that man is free and that sooner or later he is bound to rebel against any kind of slavery, whether it be visible and brutal as in political tyrannies, or subtly imposed by means of an economic system. The only subjection that man admits is that imposed by law.

When the "sorcerers" attempted to oblige workmen and businessmen to pay forced tribute through inflation, those men, even the most humble and least informed, reacted against that veiled form of

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slavery and tried to free themselves by buying gold. It is useless for the "sorcerers" to accuse the speculators and the hoarders. There are always speculators and hoaders; but they can never cause harm when freedom reigns, however imperfectly. Only when official regulations reach a point at which they begin to choke the common man and he rebels do the speculators and the hoarders find a propitious soil for their activities. And this is what has happened at the present time.

A Discipline as Well as a Protection

For thousands of years gold has represented, for some reason deep-seated in human nature, a discipline and at the same time a protection for the individual. On the one hand, it guarantees his savings which are the result of his work. On the other, it obliges him to submit to certain rules the most fundamental of which is that he may not enjoy anything that is not the product of that effort. On the government level it works in the same way. The gold reserves of a country constitute the best guarantee and protection for its inhabitants and are the result of the intelligence and work of the whole nation. At the same time, if the reserves are well used, they prevent the modern "sorcerers" (demagogues and false "experts" in economy) from wasting the resources of the community and surreptitiously enslaving men. These "sorcerers" can fall back on all the magic formulas they want to, but in the end they will be unable to prevent men from buying gold; and the discipline this imposes will prevent the "sorcerers" from carrying out their designs.

This discipline annoys the "sorcerers." The impotence they feel is well reflected in a cartoon published in the United States during the recent crisis. In it appears a monument with a resplendent gold calf. At the foot of the monument, the World is kneeling. The caption below says, "Still doing business in the same old way!"

Though the symbolism is different—because the annoyance is not against the "materialism" of gold but rather against the discipline it imposes – what appeared to be dead seems to reappear with characteristic immutability.

If the "sorcerers" – and others – wish to escape from the discipline imposed by gold, they should invent another discipline. They cannot live with a permanent deficit. They cannot squeeze blood from a turnip. They cannot multiply material goods by means of the simple expedient of printing a piece of paper. They have to work, save, invest; and only then, when

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the desired goods have been produced, may they enjoy them.

The "sorcerers" still have a card up their sleeve to justify themselves. They will now say that there has been an excess of economic freedom in the world, that the lack of sufficient controls on international trade has brought about imbalances and that the governments have not known how to plan and take a firm enough hand in the economic processes. That is to say, they will fall back on the great political fraud of blaming the crisis upon a freedom that has not existed, taking care to hide the fact that their maneuvers in the monetary and investment plane — principally those of a public nature — and other more refined controls that restrain freedom have actually precipitated the crisis.

Inflation: Cause of the Crisis

The fundamental cause that has lead to the present crisis can be found in inflation. Inflation does not consist, as many believe, in the rise in prices. This is simply a consequence of inflation or a visible sign of it, in the same way that fever is a sign of illness.

Inflation occurs when, through various schemes, greater means of payment are placed in the hands of the public than should be available from goods already produced and from certain individual expectations with regard to liquidity and savings. Among those schemes, the most usual are deficits in national budgets, privileges granted to certain large private and state enterprises that are allowed to exist outside the market in a state of insolvency, salary raises above increases in productivity, and attempts to force development by financing with currency issues and false credits. This all means one thing: a deficit. It implies a political and moral problem; not an economic one. One lives with a deficit because that is the way he prefers or because there is no will to resist pressures exerted by those who use techniques to bring it about. Ultimately, the problem simply comes down to the fact that one spends more than he produces.

Inflation is the social cancer of our times. Individual freedom and order in free communities depend on whether it is possible to overcome that ill. I should like to remind you here of warnings expressed more than a decade ago by two eminent men who have played a decisive role in the reconstruction of the postwar world: Ludwig Erhard and Jacques Rueff.

With regard to the individual problem, Erhard pointed out: "These ideas, thought out fairly and consistently, should move us to include monetary stability

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among the fundamental rights of man who has the right to expect the State to protect every citizen . . . ."

On the fate of communities, Rueff has been tirelessly repeating warnings such as these:

> Since 1945 we have been developing the mechanism which, unquestionably, unleashed the disaster of 1929-1933. It is up to us to decide if we are going to allow our civilization to be propelled toward the inevitable catastrophe. Though we are on the brink of disaster it is still possible to avoid it if we are determined enough. . . . The problem (of the present international monetary system) will be solved soon either under pressure of an emergency or by peaceful deliberation. . . . If action is taken in time, the peoples of the West will be saved from the disorder and suffering of a new world crisis. . . . Today, after 40 years of inflation, freedom will be saved through the rehabilitation of money. . . .

Inflation, which moved slowly at first but gained momentum during the past few years, has already led us to the first lap of the crisis. I have heard many people say, "Nothing will happen to gold or the monetary system until November because then there will be elections in the United States and it is not advisable to deal with such problems during the election period." As if it were possible to avoid crises until convenient to the political parties! The fact is that the inflationary illness has ignored the electoral calendar and obliged everyone to take heed of it.

On Saturday the 16th and Sunday the 17th of March of this year, a meeting took place in Washington among the governors of the principal central banks and international financial institutions; and they did the only thing they could do: they gained time. Some of them have been expressing warnings that no one wanted to hear and now they have the disagreeable task of doing what they never wanted to do. With the few instruments at their disposal, they have obtained a respite that should be utilized. The future of free society depends on what is done during the next few months.

The measures that were taken do not in any way solve the problem. They simply postpone it, and at the cost of admitting that it was not possible to keep faith. This is a severe blow to stability and confidence, subtle mechanisms on which the whole social order is based. But there was no other way, and it had to be done.

The Two-pronged Problem

There are two separate problems which, due to the relationship between them, are often confused.

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The first is the price of gold and the holdings of dollars in the central banks. The second is the discipline to which community life must adjust in order not to spend more than is produced.

The first problem can be solved by means of monetary artifices and a political decision taken jointly by the principal nations. But if the second problem is not solved simultaneously—that is, adjusting from now on to a specific discipline in order to eliminate deficits – the gold problem will crop up again and the sacrifices imposed by its temporary solution will have been entirely worthless. A monetary devaluation – or gold revaluation – makes sense if it is aimed at canceling past errors and building a better life in the future by avoiding further errors of that nature. That cancelation, that is in the nature of a surgical operation, does not in itself solve the problem nor does it guarantee that it will not reappear. It simply puts an end to an untenable situation; after that, everything depends on whether the true causes of the ill are eliminated.

This first step which has been taken does not as yet have the characteristics of liquidation. As I have said, it constitutes a means of gaining time. Now we will have to study and solve the above mentioned problems with all speed. Conditions today are much worse than those prevailing three or four years ago, when public confidence had not been undermined. But in any case, they are better than those that will come up in the future if the consideration of said problems is postponed again.

In many countries, among them Argentina, we have lived through this kind of experience dramatically for the past 25 years. Today, these problems are extended on an international scale. The future of the free world depends on the leaders of the West finding a way to check inflation and establishing a monetary order without which freedom cannot be safeguarded. ◈

IDEAS ON LIBERTY ***Diluting the Money***

AS WELL might they have attempted to show that a beverage made by mixing a quart of wine with two quarts of water would possess all the exhilarating quality of the original, undiluted liquid.

ANDREW DICKSON WHITE
Fiat Money Inflation in France

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The Threat of Wage and Price Controls

EMERSON P. SCHMIDT

THERE is growing talk in Washington and elsewhere that wage and price controls are now necessary, or at least inevitable. The consumer price index of the Bureau of Labor Statistics has been rising by more than 4 per cent per annum in recent months. Even if the surcharge on corporate and individual incomes and the slight cut in government expenditures provided by law in June, 1968 – as well as some monetary restraint – should slow down our economic growth and result in a rise in unemployment, the probability of a continuous rise in prices is strong.

Wage-fringe settlements have been running at 50 to 100 per cent or more in excess of the general rise in overall productivity. Numerous union contracts have one to two years to run with their contractual built-in labor cost increases.

Thus, the prospects of rising living costs even under a somewhat softer economy are strong. Profit margins will be under pressure. Losses by numerous companies will be inevitable. Sales for many companies and in many lines may decline just enough to cut deeply into what a few months before were profitable operations. But the general public, not understanding the nature of cost pressures but noting that unemployment has moved up fractionally, will fail to see why prices should still be rising. There must be something wrong! Why not get the government to protect the consumer?

Those who urge government controls either have short memories or have had no experience

Dr. Schmidt, economic consultant, writer, and lecturer, served from 1943 to 1963 as Director of Economic Research of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States.

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trying to live under controls. The case for the free market economy, as well as the only real cause of inflation (deficit spending and loose monetary policies), are well known by FREEMAN readers. So, let us simply review here some of the controllist experiences within our own generation.

Meat Price Control

World War II price controls continued until the late fall of 1946, about fifteen months after the end of the war. The attempt to control the prices of meats ended in utter futility; the end came in a total collapse.

In May, 1946, the Bureau of Labor Statistics stated:

> Meat counters were empty more often during the first four days of the week of May 15, 1946, than any corresponding period in any month since March 1944. Approximately 85 per cent of the stores had no veal, more than four-fifths were without pork loins, ham or bacon, and almost seven out of ten often had no beef or lamb.

Official statistics for a year or two earlier showed no decline of the animal population on the farms which could account for this massive disappearance of red meat. Something else must have happened.

A little earlier Mayor LaGuardia of New York reported to Congress:

> The inspector visited 105 stores in 43 towns scattered throughout the Black Market area. He found that 48 of the stores had no meat.

This refrain was voiced by the meat cutters union (AF of L) in the spring of 1946:

> We know that the present government regulations in the meat industry are unenforceable; the legitimate dealer cannot pay the prices paid by the bootleggers and keep within the OPA restrictions. . . . As a result
>
> (1) the public's meat bill is increased by billions of dollars a year;
>
> (2) thousands of men and women in packing plants are unemployed;
>
> (3) hundreds of legitimate slaughterers and dealers in meat are unable to stay in business.

Here we note reference to "the black market" and to "bootleggers." Surely an industry the size of the packing industry could not be taken over by the black market and bootleggers! There must be some other explanation — some other part of the story.

The data of the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed that employment in packing plants dropped to 93,000 in October, 1946, reflecting a large diversion of livestock from the packing plants. Within one month after

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OPA controls were removed, employment increased to 163,000, and by the end of December, 1946, reached 180,000 – nearly double the October figures.

Even so, many people apparently unaware of economic cause and effect, lamented the abolition of the controls and spoke of the price gougers. Price controls broke down in 1946, and President Harry S Truman merely officiated at the final rites.

But it is well to recall how reluctant the President was to decontrol prices. As late as October 14, 1946, he issued a statement containing some remarkably revealing language:

> Some have even suggested that the government go out on to the farms and ranges and seize the cattle for slaughter. This would indeed be a drastic remedy. But we gave it long and serious consideration. We decided against the use of this extreme wartime emergency power of government. It would be wholly impractical because the cattle are spread throughout all parts of the country.
>
> Another remedy suggested by many people was to have the government seize the packing houses. This offered no real solution, however, because the seizing of empty packing plants would avail us nothing without the livestock.

Business as Usual in Texas

An experience of the last OPA administrator in 1946 finally convinced President Truman of the futility of price control. Paul Porter, in charge of OPA, and Clinton Anderson, Secretary of Agriculture, had not been seeing eye-to-eye on control measures. The President, as Mr. Porter told me the story, ordered Porter to reach an agreement with Secretary Anderson and stop the feuding. Porter went to see Anderson in his home state, New Mexico, to carry out this mission.

On the way back to Washington, Porter said, he stopped in Texas and happened upon an auction sale of cattle. The live-weight prices exceeded the OPA prices of dressed meat! Sidling up to a man who appeared to have an interest in the sales and the prices being offered, and without being too obvious about it all, Porter inquired: "How come these prices?" The man didn't seem to understand. After some further conversation, the Texan said, "Oh, you mean this here OP and A?"

"Yes," said Porter, "What about this OP and A?"

The Texan answered nonchalantly and innocently, "I don't think they have put it into effect yet down here."

When Porter got back to Wash-

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ington he told the President of his Texas experience. The President, without further ado, called for the end of World War II price control.

The history of price controls and wage and salary controls is replete with countless episodes similar to the drastic experience in the packing and meat industry. Description and analysis of these innumerable cases fill many volumes. So let us take a look at what the President said when he terminated controls:

> The law of supply and demand, operating in the market place, will, from now on, serve the people better than would continued regulation of prices by the government. . . . I am convinced that the time has come when such controls can serve no useful purpose. Their further continuance would do the nation's economy more harm than good. Accordingly, I have directed immediate abandonment of all controls over wages, salaries, and prices." (Nov. 9, 1946)

This was a marked turn-around by the President. It took some dramatic events and experiences to cause him to change his mind. Yet, how short memories are! In early 1948, he again asked for comprehensive controls, though Congress then refused him such powers. A massive price control and wage control program was reinstituted during the Korean "police action." Defending all this, President Truman, said:

> These people who say we should throw out price controls and rent controls are wrong. They are just as wrong now as they were back in 1946. (June 14, 1951)

Who was wrong and when, we need not further detail. Public opinion polls, for what they are worth, have indicated in recent months that a majority of the public now again favors controls.

Words of Warning

But fortunately, not everyone has such a short memory or such faith in government controls.

The Economic Report of the Council of Economic Advisers in 1968 stated the situation in a short sentence worthy of recall:

> Although such controls may be unfortunately popular when they are not in effect, the appeal quickly disappears once people live under them. (Page 119)

This view is widely held by most responsible government agency people in Washington.[1] But the political winds may blow into a controllist gale at any time. A 4 per cent rise in prices per year cuts the value of the dollar in

[1] For recent expressions see, *A Perspective on Wage and Price Controls.* Chamber of Commerce of the United States, Washington, April, 1968.

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half in just 18 years. In terms of the early 1930's, we now have a 38¢ dollar. Rarely does a year pass without some Congressional committee or subcommittee, or several of them, recommending some form of price control, sometimes labeled "price surveillance."

The dangers are close at hand. Inflation, even though created by government policies, becomes politically "unacceptable." A bit of slack from an overheated economy atmosphere also becomes unacceptable. Henry Wallich, a former member of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, put it this way:

> To call inflation and recession "unacceptable" is to call, in effect, for price and wage controls. Controls have long loomed as the last refuge of the unsuccessful planner. Yet of all the "unacceptable" solutions, they are the least acceptable.[2]

Have we not had enough experience and warnings in regard to inflation to know how to prevent it – and to avoid the authoritarian people-control, which goes by the name of wage and price control?

No country has succeeded in checking inflation without adopting policies which first checked government spending and the growth in the stock of money. Every country which has held down the expansion in the stock of money has also checked the rise in the general level of prices. ◈

[2] *Newsweek*, July 8, 1968.

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The Price of Price Controls

THE WHOLE recorded history of man is strewn with the wreckage of the great civilizations which have crumbled under price controls; and in forty centuries of human experience, there has never been – so far as I can discover – a single case where such controls have stopped, or even curbed for long, the forces of inflation. On the contrary, in every instance I can find, they have discouraged production, created shortages, and aggravated the very evils they were intended to cure.

IRVING S. OLDS

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Recipe for Failure

PAUL L. POIROT

1 Promise of Federal aid
12 Hard-core unemployed
1 Thriving business enterprise
1 Pinch of American taxpayer

Liberally marinate a "depressed area" in Federal aid until the people have abandoned all sense of self-responsibility, self-respect, and human dignity.

Politically integrate a dozen of the resultant "hard-core unemployed" into jobs in a thriving business enterprise, on the theory that "the public interest" takes priority over efficient production of goods and services customers want.

Squeeze from American taxpayers amounts sufficient to cover any waste or loss of resources involved in this operation.

Agitate this unfortunate combination until sufficiently frustrated to abandon the scheme and start over.

Serves no one.

PRESIDENT JOHNSON, early in 1968, announced a program to place the hard-core unemployed in permanent private-industry JOBS. The National Alliance of Businessmen promptly sprang forth to implement the idea. Some 30,000 job openings had been pledged by various firms before mid-year, and their initial requests for Federal aid to hire and train hard-core workers averaged just under $3,000 for each trainee.[1]

[1] *The Wall Street Journal*, July 2, 1968.

Early reports of experience and progress under the program have been generally favorable, reflecting the popular enthusiasm for so worthy an objective.[2] Much as one might wish to share such enthusiasm, the evidence and returns

[2] For a typical report see *U.S. News and World Report*, July 1, 1968, pp. 54-57, "Training the Unemployables," describing the experience of one company, Lockhead Aircraft, and pointing up the opportunities — and pitfalls — of this campaign by which "men once deemed unemployable are being turned into competent workers."

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from this new program to date are too meager to justify the hope that human nature has drastically changed for the better in 1968.

Despite what some of the spokesmen for business have been saying about the new duties of management and their willingness to help the government remodel society, the fact is that there is no measurable market demand for "social progress" as such. The prospect of a subsidy or payment of $3,000 or more for the training of a worker may seem a reasonable risk to some businessmen; they may see a chance there for a reasonable return on their time and investment – perhaps, a profit. But taking such a government contract is not quite the same thing as competing efficiently to serve consumers.

There is a consumer demand for trained employees, if not directly, at least for the goods and services resulting from such training. Market wage rates and prices tell workers when it is to their advantage to seek further training, and in what fields; and these same market signals tell businessmen when to step up or cut back on training programs.

Consumers are fickle; their wants and choices are constantly changing. Every change calls for new jobs, new equipment, new employees, new skills – training. The successful firm provides that training and shows a profit on the time and effort invested. That's what market demand means: Consumers gladly reward, in the form of profit, the most efficient suppliers. And no self-respecting trainee or employee would begrudge his trainer that profit. Who wants to be trained by those who bankrupt themselves in the process? Who wants to understudy a failure? What is so great about being added to the payroll of a company receiving a $3,000 government subsidy for the favor?

Unused Resources

When the social reformers with governmental power proclaim a need that cannot be detected or measured in the market, the businessman who volunteers to fill that need can hardly pretend to be operating in the free market. He is dealing instead in the uncertain realm of political action.

There is a popular myth to the effect that an unemployed person or an unused resource of any kind is a drain upon the economy. It could be true that the person or resource might be employed to the advantage of everyone concerned; the economy then might be healthier than otherwise. But unemployment per se does not drain the working economy. The fact that Joe Doakes is unemployed does

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not automatically entitle him to draw goods and services out of the market place. He is neither putting anything into the market nor withdrawing anything from it – as far as his unemployment is concerned.

The foregoing, however, is not the total picture in the United States today. Legal action has been taken to give the unemployed person drawing rights upon scarce resources. In a sense, he has been handed a tax collector's permit. How much he may lawfully extract from producers depends upon how little he produces. Not his poverty nor his lack of productivity, but the tax-power granted to him by government in the form of special privilege, is what allows him to drain the economy. So, let us bear in mind that coercive power has been given to those we otherwise identify as the hard-core unemployed. There is little prospect of their learning to serve themselves through honest employment as long as they share the belief that the rest of the world owes them a living and as long as they hold the political power to prove it.

It is normal and natural for the individual to act in his own interest. If he clearly sees it is to his benefit to develop the skills to earn a better living, he is likely to be in the market for such training. This is a demand situation to which suppliers can respond – an opportunity for profitable private enterprise.

Fruits of Intervention

In contrast, consider the effect of various government welfare programs over the years. What have we accomplished with force? To what lengths have we gone to shatter the mirror in which men would identify their own interests?

The more a man earns, the higher tax rate he must pay on his earnings. He may lose Old Age or Disability benefits if he earns too much. Higher earnings may render him ineligible for low-rent subsidized housing or Medicaid or Aid to Dependent Children or Food Stamps or Unemployment Compensation or other welfare payments. The law has granted him these "rights," given him power to use against the taxpayer, made it very difficult for him to discern whether or not it is in his best interest to train for a job and improve his capacity to earn.

Some gentle reader may be shocked at reference to political power in these terms. But it is high time to remember that government is coercive force – pure and simple. And it is high time to stop asking government to perform any duty for us if the use of

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police power seems inappropriate to that task.

The political weapon comes in many shapes and sizes, some of which are difficult to recognize. The protective tariff hides an iron fist, as does any charter or grant of special privilege. Organized labor wields governing power in excluding competition from various job opportunities. So do many licensed professionals. Farm subsidy checks are drawn against taxpayers under compulsion. So is every other payment made by any government to any individual—simply because government *is* and can be *nothing but* the power of coercion.

Identifying the Problem

The point is this: tax-power is the hard-core of the unemployment problem in the United States. Some persons are unemployed because employers are strictly forbidden, under full penalty of the law, to pay as little as those persons will earn. Some are unemployed because unions, empowered by law, will not admit them to certain jobs. Most of the unemployed are regularly drained of their dignity by bureaucrats who hand out tax-collected resources, thus inviting their "clients" not to work. And some of the unemployed are just waiting until Congress reloads that ancient blunderbuss recently rechristened the "negative income tax."

Professor Paul A. Samuelson, in his *Newsweek* column of June 10, 1968, finds hardly anything wrong with a negative income tax except its "unappetizing name." What politician wants to be negative! "So," says he, "call it by the sweeter sounding and more informative, name of an 'incentive income supplement.'"

But the Professor, in typical fashion, is mincing words. He knows very well that the principle of the so-called negative income tax was fully incorporated in the "progressive" income tax in effect in the United States since 1913. The principle is to soak the rich for the presumed benefit of the poor; on a steeply rising scale, take from those who produce most efficiently and give to those who do not. Now, after 55 years, he wants to change the name of the game to "incentive income supplement." Under the old name, it didn't solve the problem of poverty. Nor will sweetening the sound of socialism change its effect. Diminishing the rewards for production inevitably and invariably will hurt the poorest among us more than it hurts those better cushioned against starvation.

There is no cause for either a student or a professor of econom-

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ics in 1968 to ignore the lessons of socialism so eloquently told by the millions of victims of famine in Russia and other lands that at times have carried the "incentive income supplement" to its logical conclusion.

Justice?

There is an alternative to "progressive" socialism, and whether it be called laissez faire or the free market or open competition or private enterprise makes very little difference. It affords to each individual precisely what he deserves – which is another way of spelling *justice*. One serves himself through serving others; some call it the Golden Rule. This formula permits a person to be charitable, at his discretion, and with his own resources; but it does not commandeer his property, against his will, for disposition by others.

If Professor Samuelson is determined to practice injustice and interfere with the way the market allocates goods and services according to the guides of supply and demand and consumer choice, and if he wants an "incentive income supplement" that might be more helpful than harmful to the poor, let him try subsidizing success rather than failure. He could call it "positive taxation," though it would be regressive in fact, like the present social security tax: exempt from taxation all earnings above a certain figure. Then, distribute the proceeds, not directly to consumers, but indirectly to those most efficient at supplying the goods and services consumers want. Give the subsidies to the producers, in proportion to amounts they have invested in the productive facilities and tools that create job opportunities and supply the market with goods and services.

Subsidizing the Efficient

If the Samuelsons of the Great Society were to carefully examine the farm price support program in its over-all application in the United States since the mid-thirties, they might begin to grasp the implications of subsidizing the rich. Not that there is any excuse or justification for such interference with the market! But the reason why such interference has been tolerable for so long is that the farm subsidies by and large have gone to the most efficient producers of food and fiber. Not the poor, small, inefficient farmers, but the large, efficient, prosperous ones have received most of the price support payments. Despite the various "soil bank" and "plowing under" names for the game, the bulk of the benefits have been paid to those who produced the most – almost

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as well as the market would have done if unmolested. And the net result has been an abundance—even a surplus of cheap food to feed the poor of the entire world. No political meddler in his right mind would have planned it that way—but it has happened that way in spite of the intentions of the planners.

Maybe the farm program hasn't helped the poor, but it hasn't hurt them very much. By the same token, subsidizing savers and investors would better serve the poor than to give the same amount to consumers. If professors insist on minding other people's business, let them think in terms of a "positive income tax," the proceeds to be used to subsidize the most efficient producers of goods and services.

Fortunately, such a proposal is wholly lacking in political appeal. Political proponents of farm price supports never meant to encourage production; that was quite accidental. Except by such accident, there isn't the ghost of a chance of passing a law to reward success. But there is no need of legislation for that purpose; an unhampered market economy, leaving each person free to pursue his own peaceful interests, would do the job very well. All that is asked of politicians and their brain trusts is some faith in freedom and some skepticism of those who wield political power.

The Mark of Integrity

We expect too much if we expect virtue and integrity from those who hold special privilege and live by the power it gives them. Nor will we find freedom if we look to them for it. Any freedom any person enjoys will be earned by him through his own virtue and integrity in his daily dealing with others of virtue and integrity.

These are qualities we may hope to find in our business associates—the successful suppliers and the satisfied customers in the market place—under a simple but inflexible code of justice: *each gets precisely what he earns by serving others.*

Individuals or groups may hold and practice other codes of justice, and of mercy, and may have excellent reasons for such codes. But no code demands greater integrity of men than does the simple code of the market. Is integrity too much to ask of those who solicit our trade?

Just what is integrity? What is this quality we have every right to expect of a business associate?

Well, we expect his product or service to be as good as his word, and his word as good as his bond. We expect him to stand fully and

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personally responsible for what he says and does. Our right to expect that much of him rests upon our demonstrated effort to live by that same code – a condition of mutual respect.

Such integrity seems hardly too much to ask of a man who wants to do business. Yet, we know that it is human and easy to err.

In good faith, we contract for the services of an employee, who becomes a businessman when he thus enters the market. But sometimes we find that instead of devoting full time to the task he has agreed to perform, he uses part of his time at our expense to organize his fellow employees to slow down on the job, or strike in unison, or forcibly deny other willing workers entry to the job opportunities thus neglected.

This is the sort of behavior we might expect if we were dealing with a governmental monopoly such as the Postal Service; for in that case, not the negligent employee, but the general taxpayer is held responsible for the failure to serve efficiently. We may expect such behavior from employees of any organization which holds an exclusive charter or franchise to serve a given area. There come to mind illustrations involving public carriers, water companies, garbage collection, taxi service, other utilities. But we do not expect and should not have to tolerate such behavior from a businessman who is actively competing to serve customers satisfactorily. Of him, we expect responsible performance – and integrity.

Whenever an employee comes to work for us with political privileges and power, we ought to be suspect of him. And if we, as employer, have entered into an alliance with employees of that character, our customers may well suspect our good intentions and capacity to deliver goods or services according to contract. How is the customer to know against whom the unioneer's political power will be used?

A Peculiar Partnership

With mounting evidence on every hand of the failures of compulsory socialism, one hears more and more, from outstanding businessmen among others, of a new and golden opportunity for private enterprise to "volunteer" and carry out the tasks at which government has failed – a "private corporation" to operate the postal monopoly, a national alliance of businessmen to train the unemployable or remodel the inner city or clear up the ghetto or attend to foreign aid. Solving the problems of Vietnam doubtless will be added to the list.

Scarcely anyone seems to be

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concerned that these tasks for the most part are no more the appropriate domain of private enterprise than of government. The conditions of the problems are so qualified and stipulated that there is no solution. There *are* serious problems in these areas that ought to be solved; but they have not yet been identified or described with sufficient clarity to yield to solution. To propose that businessmen join forces with government, and accomplish with modified power what the full power of government could not do, is to confuse and corrupt the functions of both the free market and the police force. Business is not done through compulsion. Policemen may need guns to keep the peace, but not to wage war on poverty.

Not until the government gets out of a particular business, relinquishes its monopoly power in that field, is there much prospect that private enterprise will seek or discover opportunities to profitably serve the needs in that area. As long as government persists in granting special privileges and in confiscating profits earned and property invested, businessmen are well advised to keep out – not to volunteer their services. If government will confine its efforts to the defense of life and property – a fair field and no favors – that is the very most it can do to attract private enterprise to problem areas. Indeed, for the most part, that *is* the problem, and the solution is just that simple: use governing power only to keep the peace.

Unwanted Volunteers

Human affairs are endlessly complicated by those who "volunteer" the power of government to solve all sorts of real or imagined problems for which armed forces have no competence. And the excuse often is heard that private enterprise failed to do anything about those problems. Now, from the other side of the vicious circle, come voices urging private intervention where government intervention has failed. And a powerful case can be made for voluntary cooperation rather than compulsion in many human relationships.

But it does not necessarily follow that everything which governments have undertaken or been urged to do ought to be done – either voluntarily or coercively. To voluntarily relieve individuals of the unpleasant consequences of their own weaknesses and mistakes can be just as harmful to them as to let the government do it. To "voluntarily" relieve individuals of the fruits of their own efforts without their consent is still rank injustice. Private enterprise is not something that can be done to someone else. It is for

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participants only – willing participants.

The point is excellently stated in a recent article, "Enterprise Potential of the Inner City" by John H. Clay, Negro president of the Negro-owned, profit-making Business Development Corporation (BDC) in Philadelphia:

> It is tragic that this nation, dependent for its great strength upon private enterprise, until lately has failed to recognize a dichotomy of approach so very evident to us in the "inner-city": to remove and eradicate poverty, our nation has tried primarily to rely upon social beneficence and assistance controlled by bodies *outside* the population affected, throwing away the vibrant lessons from our own history demonstrating time and time again that self-determination and individual initiative, in economic as well as political matters, breed capacity, responsibility, commitment, involvement, motivation . . . and results.
>
> In our society's developing commitment against poverty and disadvantage, the greatest problem we face is not one of adequate funding but of adequate wisdom in applying this basic principle. For in a society made strong through competitive, private enterprise, we cannot solve the problems of the cities through a two-society approach whose dominant themes are achievement-fostering enterprise outside the core cities and funded social reinforcement inside dependency areas; this dual approach implies inferiority and cements dependency, while fostering alienation in both areas. We only can eradicate poverty through steps to install and foster in dependent areas not a share of the fruits of enterprise but, rather, *the enterprise system itself*. It is the only instrument dynamic enough.[3]

Mr. Clay has reiterated the ancient and ageless truth that people do best for themselves when left alone – and free. The idea that good may come of mixing business and government is a serious threat to human progress – not a hopeful sign. ◈

[3] *NAM Reports*, July 15, 1968.

IDEAS ON LIBERTY

Alexis de Tocqueville

IF IT BE ADMITTED that a man, possessing absolute power, may misuse that power by wronging his adversaries, why should a majority not be liable to the same reproach? Men are not apt to change their characters by agglomeration; nor does their patience in the presence of obstacles increase with the consciousness of their strength. And for these reasons I can never willingly invest any number of my fellow creatures with that unlimited authority which I should refuse to any one of them.

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THE PUBLIC BE DAMNED

MILTON FRIEDMAN

A PRESIDENTIAL commission has just made official what you and I have long known from experience. The Post Office "each year . . . slips further behind the rest of the economy in service, in efficiency, and in meeting its responsibilities as an employer."

The commission recommended that the Post Office be converted from a government department to a nonprofit government corporation. That might improve matters some, but since the Post Office would still be a monopoly and a government organization, it would remain high-priced and inefficient. A far better solution is one I suggested many months ago (*Newsweek*, Oct. 9, 1967) – simply repeal the present provision making it illegal for private enterprise to provide mail service. Competition would quickly set modern technology to work in the transmission of mail, and simultaneously lower the cost to the consumer. The government system would have to shape up or ship out.

But neither the one proposal nor the other will be adopted. The facts of political life that make this prediction a near-certainty were brought home to me when I was writing my earlier column on the Post Office. Why not, I thought, use it to persuade a congressman to introduce a bill to repeal the present prohibition on private delivery of mail? That would have started desirable legislation on its way, made the column more topical, and given the Congressional sponsor some publicity. So I spoke to a number of friends in Congress.

All were favorable to the substance of the bill, yet none was willing to introduce it. As one congressman said to me, "Can you suggest any unions we might conceivably persuade to testify in favor of it?" I could not do so.

Strong pressure groups will oppose changing present arrangements: the postal unions that have become experts in lobbying before Congress; the users of third- and fourth-class mail, who fear that the subsidy they now enjoy would be threatened if Congress no longer finances postal deficits.

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No strong pressure groups will favor the proposed changes—which serve only the widespread general interest of the public. If the proposed changes were made – if, for example, private competition were permitted – pressure groups would emerge. Enterprises that succeeded in the new business and their employees and customers would become such groups. But these are only potential, not actual.

A congressman has limited time and influence. It is wise for him to husband that time and influence to promote measures that have some chance of being adopted, or, at least, of bringing him some political support. What can he gain by the purely quixotic gesture of sponsoring a bill to introduce competition into the postal service? Only the active hostility of present special interests. True, many more persons would be benefited than would be harmed and the aggregate benefit would greatly exceed any transitional harm. *But*, and it is a big but, the few persons who believe that they would be harmed will be aware of that fact, and each will expect significant harm, so it will pay them to fight the bill. Most persons who would benefit will not be aware of that fact. Even if they were, the benefit to most would be small. Hence, they are unlikely to devote much effort to promoting the bill – or even to have their vote influenced by its introduction. Their vote is likely to be determined by the matters with respect to which they are members of special interest groups.

Many citizens regard it as a paradox that a democratic government, supposed to promote the general welfare, should enact so many measures that promote special interests. It is not a paradox. It is the result to be expected when government engages in activities that have concentrated effects on small groups and widely diffused effects on the rest of the citizens. A majority rules in a political democracy, but the majority that rules is typically a coalition of special interests – not a majority promoting the general interest.

In the heyday of nineteenth-century capitalism, William H. Vanderbilt a railroad tycoon, is said to have remarked, "The public be damned" to an inquiring reporter. That may have been his attitude but it was never an accurate description of how private enterprise behaved. Competition saw to that. Enterprises that damned the public did not survive for long. But however accurate it may have been then, today the phrase fits Washington to a T. ◈

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EDUCATION IN AMERICA

GEORGE CHARLES ROCHE III

1. What Has Happened?

IN WHAT must surely be his most quoted remark, the nineteenth century novelist, Thomas Peacock, commented that anyone talking about education was the bore of all bores since his subject lacked a beginning, a middle, or an end. Anyone attempting to write on the subject would seem, therefore, to undertake a difficult assignment. Yet, what other topic has had so much written about it, so little of which is read? With his usual blunt Yankee insight, Emerson summed up the current attitude on such treatises:

It is ominous, a presumption of crime, that this word Education has so cold, so hopeless a sound. A treatise on education, a convention for education, a lecture, a system, affects us with slight paralysis and a certain yawning of the jaws.

I know what Emerson meant, yet must risk that slight paralysis and yawning of the jaws in my reader. Why? Because it seems painfully clear that our society is breaking down rather than maturing and because this trend seems likely to continue until we face and correct certain fundamental misconceptions in our educational framework.

In the last century, men of good will seemed naively confident

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that the mere communication of knowledge could change the world. All problems, all social difficulties, could be corrected if only ignorance could be conquered. Unfortunately, knowledge and ignorance are at best highly relative terms. The problem is further aggravated when we ask the question, "Knowledge and ignorance of what?" Sadly enough, that issue was all too seldom faced when we were constructing the philosophy and institutions of modern American education.

The Mixed Blessings of Universal Education

Following the lead of the nineteenth century, modern America and most other nations of the Western World have established universal institutionalized education. However, there are some signs that ignorance has not yet been vanquished. There also are signs that such knowledge as has been imparted has brought little progress toward "the good society." Worst of all, there are signs that teaching everyone to read may be less than an unmixed blessing:

> . . . teaching everyone to read opens minds to propaganda and indoctrination at least as much as to truths; and on political and social matters it is propaganda and indoctrination rather than truth that universal education has most conspicuously nurtured.[1]

Modern dictators have made very effective use of universal institutionalized education.

As universal education has failed to provide the utopia expected of it, the Western World in general, and the United States in particular, has begun to suspect that even our advanced, literate, "modern" civilization on which we so pride ourselves may prove to be mortal after all. We are beginning to suspect that civilizations can die as well as grow. Moreover, we are becoming restive as we see some of the signs of decay around us. We are beginning to suspect that there are other obstacles blocking our path to an ideal society, obstacles derived from the human condition, obstacles not easily overcome by merely providing larger and larger schools, more and more books, and more and more of all the other trappings of universal institutionalized education. The differences we note between an "educated man" and a "good man" should cause us to re-examine what we mean when we use the word "education."

Surely, education should be helpful rather than harmful. Sure-

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[1] James Burnham, *Suicide of the West*, pp. 138-139.

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ly, education should be encouraged to the utmost. At least this is the way we all talk about the subject. Do we really mean it? More important, should we really mean it? The answer to these questions depends on what sort of "education" we have in mind.

Perhaps the most "educated" people of antiquity were the Greeks, yet they destroyed themselves. The Germans have been among the most literate and most completely "educated" people of modern times, yet succumbed to the siren song of an Adolf Hitler. Despite the fact that much of what passes for "education" produces undesirable results in whole nations, despite the results it has been producing lately among many well-endowed young people within our own society, we still find in the minds of most people that "more education" is the answer to all problems.

An alarming percentage of our citizens, it is to be feared, stop with the word "education" itself. It is for them a kind of conjuror's word, which is expected to work miracles by the very utterance. If politics becomes selfish and shortsighted, the cure that comes to mind is "education." If juvenile delinquency is rampant, "education" is expected to provide the remedy. If the cultural level of popular entertainment declines, "education" is thought of hopefully as the means of arresting the downward trend. People expect to be saved by a word when they cannot even give content to the word.[2]

Shortchanging the Students

Twentieth century America is a society in which all children go to school. Yet, today our cities are populated by children worse behaved and more socially dangerous than the less "educated" youngsters of former times. Let me hasten to insist that I am not against children learning to read. In fact, one of the complaints which can be leveled against modern education is that large numbers of high school graduates are scarcely able to read and quite unable to write a coherent paragraph.

It is not that our young people have been underexposed to "education," but rather that they have been badly shortchanged in what they have received. Meanwhile, many of our high school and college graduates who have learned to read have then been condemned to spend their time with books and lectures calculated to undercut those human values that make for the good society. The resultant generations of young people with little or no knowledge of the nature of man, and a scarcely better understanding of the economics, politics, and social concepts that

[2] Richard Weaver, *Life Without Prejudice*, p. 42.

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have been produced by the great thinkers of the Western World, continue to pour from our "educational" system. Surely, these young people cannot be blamed for the direction of our society. Surely, a system which produces young people, some of whom cannot read, many of whom cannot think, and most of whom lack knowledge of their own heritage and the moral values which underlie it, is a system which needs serious attention. We have been pouring unlimited amounts of money into the mechanics of the education of our young. Perhaps it is time we began to devote a little thought to the subject as well.

Meanwhile, we Americans seem to have almost no idea what to do with our children. School, in many cases, seems to be a convenient place to file our young people until the draft boards or the labor unions absorb them. As parents and future employers, it appears that at least a part of our concern for more and more years of "education" is to get the youngsters off our minds. This seems to be evidenced by more preschool education, by the extension of the high school years through the thirteenth and fourteenth grades at junior colleges, by our assumption that nearly all young people should now attend at least four years of college, and more and more of these same people attend graduate school as well. In the process we have cheapened the bachelor's degree to a level inferior to what an eighth grade diploma once constituted and we have made the Ph.D. degree a mere license to teach. "What price education?"

Surely, American education suffers from an almost unbelievable amount of aimlessness and confusion. We spend more on our educational institutions than have most societies past or present. Yet, as our buildings grow larger and larger, the graduates from them seem to be less and less prepared, in either mind or character, for carrying on our civilization. It is widely assumed, and correctly so, that our prospects as a nation and as a civilization rest upon our ability to inculcate skills and civilized values in our young people. Such a task is so important that our society cannot any longer afford to let it drift as it has been drifting. As one critic has suggested, "Is it possible that 'education' is too important to be left to the educators?"

Jeremiahs Seldom Popular

Of course, it's possible to lightly dismiss such questions. Criers of doom are always warning that the end of civilization is in sight, but the sun usually seems to rise

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the next morning. Isn't it true that in our developing technology and in our scientific achievements we have been advancing steadily? Isn't it true that we have more material possessions than any other civilization, past or present? Yes, but it also is true that history is filled with the records of dead and dying civilizations; civilizations which in most cases achieved the greatest bloom of prosperity and self-satisfaction at the very time when they had so lost their way, and so departed from the very values which gave them direction, that their own decline and decay had already begun, unnoticed by most people.

There are usually on the scene some people able to sense the turn of events; but Jeremiahs seldom get a good press in their own society. People don't like to be told such things. One of the warnings concerning our own failing as a civilization comes to us, however, from a man well publicized throughout the Western World. In 1923, Albert Schweitzer commented in his *Civilization and Ethics:*

> My subject is the tragedy of the Western world-view. . . . Our civilization is going through a severe crisis. . . . Most people think that the crisis is due to the war but they are wrong. The war, with everything connected with it, is only a phenomenon of the condition of uncivilization in which we find ourselves.

Our "uncivilization" was attributed by Schweitzer to the great gap which has opened up between our material and spiritual understanding. He sensed that modern man was becoming dependent upon larger and larger economic, social, and political aggregations of power. He warned that, in the process, the individual man was finding it increasingly difficult to identify and establish his own personality. American education serves as a prime example of modern man's emphasis upon the material rather than the spiritual, an emphasis upon larger and larger aggregations of collective authority and organization within which individual personality finds a smaller and smaller place. Let anyone who doubts this attend the massive public high school or gigantic state university campus of his choice. What we teach and how we teach it makes it harder and harder for the individual to find and defend his place in the sun.

Progress and Regress

This peculiar composite of material progress and spiritual regress leads us directly to one of the dichotomies of our age. While technicians and scientists radiate optimism in their prediction of a glorious future, most of the popu-

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lar writers of our time, concerned with the human condition, view the present as an absurd joke and see the future as hopeless. All too many modern writers see the universe and human life as essentially meaningless. If anyone might doubt such a sweeping statement, let him consider the literature which our young people read today in the high schools and colleges of America. The same overwhelming impression of the meaninglessness of human life can be detected in conversation with many young people, or in even a casual perusal of the press and theater of our time.

A Dead End?

It may be that in our pursuit of "education" we have been pursuing the wrong ideas. Our American educational system might be compared to the glorious promise of the nineteenth century frontier roads leading to the West. They offered a majestic appearance as they left the East, with planted rows of trees on either side to tempt the traveler. But, as Emerson remarked, they soon became narrower and narrower and ended in a squirrel track running up a tree. There are some signs that, for all of our grand hopes and great expenditure, our institutional educational framework may likewise be leading us up a tree.

Over 2,300 years ago, Aristotle stated the question most succinctly: "Consideration must be given to the question, what constitutes education and what is the proper way to be educated." The answer appears to be one for which Western man is still searching. Perhaps it is time to remind ourselves of historian Herbert Butterfield's injunction:

> Amongst historians, as in other fields, the blindest of all the blind are those who are unable to examine their own pre-suppositions, and blithely imagine therefore that they do not possess any. . . . It must be emphasized that we create tragedy after tragedy for ourselves by a lazy unexamined doctrine of man which is current amongst us and which the study of history does not support.

Professor Butterfield would get little hearing for his remarks throughout much of the academic community today. Still, he may be right. We may have become so busy discussing "education" with the current clichés and shallow value judgments which we have come to accept, that we are overlooking some philosophic and institutional flaws of grave magnitude. Perhaps the time has come for a serious and sustained effort in thinking through the goals and means of American education. It is past time for all of us to become interested in the subject,

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especially since educators in many cases respond to criticism "by redoubling their efforts and forgetting their aims," as Robert Hutchins has said. Surely, we can do better.

Actually, this soul searching and re-examination of American education has been under way in this country ever since World War II. Many people are deeply concerned about various practical or philosophic aspects of one level or another of American education. But no single level of education can be considered in a vacuum. The students of colleges are, after all, the graduates of American high schools. The teachers of high schools are the graduates of American colleges and universities. Not only are various levels of American education interrelated, but the practical and philosophic aspects of the problem feed back upon one another to produce a complex of relationships which deserves a careful treatment within the compass of a single study.

Aspects of the Problem

Some of the problems we will be examining in an effort to achieve an improved understanding of American higher education will include:

(1) What should we be trying to teach? What is the nature of the underlying moral framework which society must pass from one generation to another for its own self-preservation?

(2) How does education fail when it departs from such an underlying moral framework? What have been the results of such a departure in our own society?

(3) What of the problems of size and the problems of population which confront our schools with overcrowding, lowering of standards, and many related difficulties?

(4) Why is it that child-centered education, education essentially *without discipline*, is a disaster, both for the child and for the society in which he is to assume a role?

(5) What of the role played by the educationists and the largely dominant philosophy currently pursued in American education?

(6) What of the failures in higher education, stemming from institutional inertia, excessive specialization, the committee mentality, the "publish or perish" syndrome, and the other shortcomings of the college and university community?

(7) What of the college revolts of our age? Who is responsible: student, faculty, or society? More important, where do we go from here?

(8) What of the problem of public versus private financing and philosophy for all levels of American education?

This listing of vital questions concerning American education could be extended. What of the public

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and private roles in research and technology? What of the problem of vocational training? What involvement should private industry have in this question? What are the wellsprings of that human creativity which has allowed society to advance as far as it has and how can those sources best be safeguarded within our educational system? What of the many good jobs being done by good people on various levels of American education and how can they best be preserved in a revamped system? And finally, what sort of a philosophy of education could best provide for America the trained, disciplined, truly human, young people so desperately needed if our nation and the Western World are to survive?

An attempt to answer all of these questions is, of course, ambitious. But such a task is made far easier by all the modern critiques of education on its various levels which have been undertaken by so many highly qualified people. Even more important, the whole rationale for a proper philosophy of education derives from a large number of distinguished thinkers, past and present, who have perceived the basic truth that how a civilization deals with its young and creative minds is the final key to the future of that civilization.

With a tip of our hat toward all those better men who have gone before, let us examine some of the problems of American education. ◈

The next article of this series will discuss "Freedom, Morality, and Education."

Education for Privacy

I SUGGEST that over the door of every academic cubicle there should hang the sign which Thoreau had over the door of his hut: "*My* destiny mended here, not yours." In short, I propose to make a plea for *education for privacy.*

MARTEN TEN HOOR

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LEAVING THE PROBLEM TO OTHERS

BEN H. CARPENTER

IN THIS dynamic country of ours, where things happen so quickly, where situations are changing at an ever accelerating tempo, it is extremely easy for us to lose perspective. In our fretting about how today differs from yesterday some of us somehow look back on yesterday as being "normal." Actually there has obviously been no such thing as normality during the last three centuries for the simple reason that there has been such steady and rapid change during the entire period.

This is a fact which apparently escapes many persons. Many of us are constantly looking to the past, dreaming of it, wishing for it, not realizing that if we were to succeed in taking ourselves back to the period when there was little change from one generation to the next we would have to return to the Middle Ages—back to the days of the Black Death, of hopeless malnutrition and superstition, of ignorance and tyranny.

Let us look at just a random selection of developments which change has brought us since this Cattle Raisers Association was organized under the Oak Tree at Graham. These developments include the gasoline engine with all its ramifications including automobiles, trucks and busses, farm tractors, piston driven airplanes, motorcycles, motor boats, power mowers, stationary engines, and mobile construction and military

Mr. Carpenter, Chairman of the Board of Southland Life Insurance Company in Dallas, recently concluded a term as President of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association. This article is from his address at their annual convention in San Antonio, March 26, 1968.

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equipment of all kinds; the diesel locomotive; turbine and jet powered aircraft; oil-fueled ships; rockets and missiles, industrial equipment and machinery of many sorts; oil- and gas-fueled space heating and cooking equipment; air conditioning; the washing machine, refrigerator, vacuum cleaner, incandescent lamps, the phonograph, telephone, movie machine, radio, television, radar, rotary drill, cream separator, milking machine, commercial fertilizers, antibiotics, feed additives, vacuum packing and freezing, the cash register, the atomic reactor, computers and electronic instruments, x-ray, the heart-lung machine, and the iron lung. And there are, of course, thousands of other amazing developments, which we are quick to become accustomed to and take for granted.

To Respond Intelligently

There can be no progress without change. Our task in life is not to resist changes but to intelligently respond to changes that take place. Many of the problems of our own cattle industry today are a partial result of the reluctance of many cattlemen to accept this fact. We must not let ourselves become so preoccupied with resistance to new ideas and with dreams of past golden memories that we fail to devote sufficient thoughts and efforts to respond to these new changes as they challenge us.

The most significant thing about the changes taking place in our environment today is the speed with which they are occurring. Dr. Thomas Stelson, head of Civil Engineering at Carnegie-Mellon University, tells us that half the knowledge an engineer had when he graduated in 1958 is now obsolete. At the same rate of change, today's graduate will find at least half his present knowledge obsolete by 1978. Or to put it another way, half of the technical knowledge an engineer will need to know in 1978 is not now available to him. No one knows what it is.

Our society has traveled fast and far in advancing our technology, our physical output, and our material well-being. We have developed the most productive form of society that man has ever enjoyed. We have taken long strides into the unknown and have extended man's influence upon his environment. But, has the swiftness of our material achievement outrun our moral and spiritual capacity?

In considering this question, W. F. Rockwell, Jr., chairman of the Board of North American Rockwell Corporation, cites the story of the American hunter who was in search of big game in West

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Africa. He was getting close to his prey when his hard-running native guides suddenly sat down to rest. The American protested to their leader. He threatened, pleaded, offered bribes, but the natives wouldn't budge.

"But why," he asked the leader, "why must they stop now?"

The leader replied, "The men say they have hurried too fast. Their bodies have run off and left their souls behind. They must wait now for their souls to catch up."

Rockwell has commented that it seems to him that this could be happening to Americans today. We may be running so fast that our technology is out-running our souls.

Max Ways, senior editor of *Fortune* magazine, has given us this warning:

"Unless we change our thinking, we won't be able to cope with the change that is taking place. Change, of course, has always been a part of the human condition. What's different about it now is the pace of change, and the prospect that it will come faster and faster, affecting every part of life, including personal values, morality, and religions, which seem most remote from technology."

And this is of great concern to me. Everywhere there seems to be an abandonment of the ancient values that have sustained and restrained the human race upon this earth. The old virtues which we were brought up to respect and copy in our daily lives, are now derided and called, at best, old-fashioned and out-of-date and, at worst, "square."

Lowering the Standards

On every hand there are signs that we are substituting materialistic values for spiritual ones — the old standards of what is right and what is wrong are being discarded and, in their stead, we are establishing doubtful codes of ethics that, if followed, can only render us impotent as a people and as a nation. Riots, demonstrations, acts which show disrespect for our flag, for high government officials, and for law and order have become a way of life for far too many Americans.

And — here is what also disturbs me most of all — instead of being outraged by what has been going on, many of our leaders on the national level seem to be spending most of their time making up excuses for behavior which we were brought up to consider as obscene, illegal, perverse, irresponsible, riotous, and even treasonous.

We hear a lot about freedom these days — and we hear very little about responsibility.

We hear a lot about the right to express one's self — and very lit-

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tle about the right of other people to avoid being offended by such expression.

We hear a lot about the underprivileged poor — but very little about the underprivileged taxpayer who is being made the scapegoat for the deserving and the undeserving poor alike.

We pussyfoot among a lot of highsounding names. We call drunkards "alcoholics," we call homosexuals "deviates," we call draft dodgers "card burners," and slackers "pacifists" or "conscientious objectors," we call dope addicts "experimenters in personality extension," we call criminals "victims of society."

Some of this may be all right. Some of it may reflect a more compassionate attitude in our society. But I think the time has come when we should and must draw a line separating compassion from softheadedness, permissiveness, and timidity.

Signs of Decline

Near the end of his great book on the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, Edward Gibbon lists the reasons for the dissolution of the great political force which had held the civilized world together for more than 500 years. The principal reasons included:

1. Excessive spending by the central government.

2. Unwillingness of the young men to bear arms in defense of their country.

3. Overindulgence in luxury.

4. Widespread sexual immorality and easy divorce, which destroyed the integrity of family life.

5. The spread of effeminacy — girls looking and acting like men, men looking and acting like girls.

6. Disregard for religion.

That was Rome, 1,400 years ago. Does the picture seem to apply to the United States today?

I have no patience with the complacent Pollyannas who pooh-pooh the idea that our moral fabric is disintegrating, and who claim that conditions are no worse today than they were 50 years ago.

When most of us were young, women didn't live in constant fear of assault, robbery, and rape. Parents could send their children down to the corner store without dying a thousand deaths until they returned. A man could walk his dog around his neighborhood at night without fear of being mugged, or beaten up, or murdered just for kicks.

We all remember when a rape was a front page story. Now, in most large cities, it's a run-of-the-mill story tucked away among the want ads and the minor traffic accidents. If a rapist wants to make the front pages, he has to commit his crime in wholesale lots

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and in an especially spectacular manner. The competition is too great.

Many of you read about the revolt last week of a large section of the student body at Howard University when a mob of students drove the university administrators out of their offices and forcibly occupied the entire administration building of the University for a period of several days. This — almost in the shadow of the Nation's Capitol.

For an example closer to home — would you believe it if I told you that three of the cattle theft rings uncovered by this association during the past year were composed of students at Texas A&M College? Now, this is something not to be dismissed lightly with the comment that "boys will be boys," when, for example, you realize that the ringleader of one group, a student in the junior class now serving five years in the penitentiary, had developed against him convicting evidence on 62 separate theft cases, including cattle, horses, trailers, and saddles. Our inspectors recovered stolen property disposed of by this group as far away as Billings, Montana, and Fort Collins, Colorado. In between this ring's major theft activities, it stripped automobiles on the campus.

Since the first of the year two sophomore students, an agricultural education major and a range science major, ring leaders of another theft group, operating in three counties, have been indicted with evidence developed by this association's inspectors.

Seeds of Revolt

And violence? Violence is too common for mention. One need only glance at the newspaper headlines to realize that the seeds of revolution are being sown throughout the country today. The assault on a single day last April of 185,000 demonstrators against the Vietnam War with displays of hatred for our country and contempt for its laws and institutions is example enough. Or the 75,000 who descended on the nation's capitol on October 21st and created mass havoc. During the past two years more than 128 American cities have experienced outbursts of racial violence.

We can't blame the newspapers. If they were to cover all the violence in their communities in the way they used to cover it, they would have to have a special editor for rape, a special editor for armed assault, and so on.

Listen to these statistics for a moment. In the United States today there is a forcible rape every 26 minutes — and these are just the rapes that are *reported.*

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There is an armed robbery every five minutes.

There is an aggravated assault every three minutes.

There is a car theft every minute of every day of the year.

Violence has become a common thing in our daily lives. Blatant disregard for the rights and the freedom of others has become a commonplace thing.

Governments like ours were formed to substitute the rule of law for the rule of force. A government can only lose the respect for which it is held when for political reasons its public officials do not fully enforce its laws.

The freedoms our forefathers fought and died to obtain are now being used to weaken and divide our great country. Listen to these statements which were publicly made by one of the more militant civil rights leaders:

"We've got to tell Johnson that if we don't get home rule here in Washington we're going to disrupt this city completely."

"In Cleveland they're building stores with no windows . . . all brick. I don't know what they think they'll accomplish. It just means we have to move from Molotov cocktails to dynamite."

In Chicago he said: "I'm going to Washington and take it over lock, stock, and barrel."

What used to be called treason is being accepted today as freedom of speech. What used to be called riot and insurrection not so long ago is today called freedom of assembly. And academic freedom, as a noted educator recently said, "has become a sort of Yalu River behind which Educators and Students alike are immune from attack but from which they are free to sally forth to attack everything else, including their own school and college."

Laggards for Leaders

Whose fault is this condition? In a way, it's everyone's fault. Too many of us have been talking about freedom without really knowing what freedom is all about.

Educators, politicians, clergymen, businessmen, farm groups, and almost everyone else – have been demanding more and more freedom for more and more people as groups – often at the expense of individual freedom. But they have failed to emphasize the responsibilities of freedom. There has been a lot of talk about so-called "Civil Rights" and absolutely no mention of "Civil Responsibilities." You can't gain freedom by taking it away from somebody else. Freedom is something you earn and deserve and build and create for yourself.

But most of all I blame the people who should have been giving

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this country responsible leadership and instead have given it meaningless phrases and political slogans. For too long a time all decisions regarding the direction and destiny of our country have been politically oriented decisions. Economic decisions have been political rather than economic, social decisions have been political rather than social, military decisions have been political rather than military, foreign policy decisions have been political rather than diplomatic, public education decisions have been political rather than practical.

If conditions were different and favorable, these national leaders would be the first to claim credit, so a great deal of the blame for the saddening conditions that do exist must be placed at the doorstep of these same national leaders who have all but incited certain elements of our society to riot . . . and have refused to condemn such riots until they became a political embarrassment.

They have led too many of our citizens to regard freedom as meaning freedom from unpleasantness, freedom from work, freedom from discipline, freedom from sacrifice, freedom from duty, freedom from responsibility, freedom from concern for your neighbor.

That isn't freedom at all. And those who lead the uninformed, the uneducated, and the ignorant along that path are guilty of political bribery and blackmail.

Instant Morality

Too many of our citizens demand the right to determine what is moral and what is not. They end up determining that nothing is immoral – everything goes. They feel no obligation toward others who maintain traditional moral standards. They feel no responsibility for the young who are not prepared for exposure to the kind of immorality that they desire to preach and practice. This is not freedom; this is irresponsibility.

When men take the law into their own hands – when men, acting as individuals, decide for themselves which laws they will obey and which they will disobey, then we don't have freedom – we have a direct and aggravated assault on *all* freedoms. In every society of free men there must be law-givers and law-abiders – and there must be penalties for those who will not abide.

The Supreme Court has preoccupied itself for years with the rights of the accused. It has all but rendered our police helpless. But let us examine the situation. Do we have a serious problem with innocent persons being wrongly convicted? Do we really believe that our police are seizing every

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opportunity to "brutalize" suspects? Is this really the problem? No, of course, it isn't. The real problem is the abuse of thousands of innocent helpless people by hardened criminals. Why, then, cannot the Supreme Court address itself to this problem, rather than destroying the effectiveness of the police who are trying to protect us?

Not long ago a judge freed a woman who had confessed to killing her four-year-old child – freed the woman because her attorney was not present when she confessed her crime. The woman thanked the judge and he reprimanded her. He said "Don't thank me, thank the Supreme Court. You should go to jail for your crime." The woman went free.

A patrolman in Washington, D.C., answered a fire alarm, and found a building burning. When he approached the fire, two men walked up to him and one man said, "This is the man that did it." The policeman said to the other man, "What do you have to say for yourself?" The second man said, "Yes, I set the fire." The court threw this confession out on the basis that the patrolman should not have questioned the second man without a lawyer present.

Some time ago the Washington police arrested a man caught in the very act of raping a 22-year-old government employee. This man had, on two other occasions within the previous six months, been charged with the same type of crime. In the first instance the case was dismissed because the victim committed suicide rather than go through the ordeal of the trial. The second case was dismissed by the trial court on the technical grounds that the police had made an illegal search because of their failure to first obtain a search warrant. He was finally tried, found guilty, and sentenced by the District Court, but listen to this: our very learned U.S. Court of Appeals reversed his conviction because the Trial Court let the jury see, at their request, the official weather report for the time of the alleged attack, which certified that the weather was clear, the temperature in the low 70's, and the visibility eight miles. The basis for the Appellate Court decision was that the trial judge erred in letting the jury see the weather report after the jury started deliberating, and that the defense counsel had no way of attacking it after he had contended at the trial that there wasn't enough light to make a positive identification possible.

This is not fiction! This is modern day America! This is law enforcement and justice under the

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"Great Society"? Why must it be that way? Why cannot the Supreme Court turn its resources to solving the crime problem rather than erecting legal means for the criminal to escape? Whose rights are most important, the general public's or the habitual criminal's? Is it any wonder that about 80 per cent of serious crime is by repeat offenders?

Downgrading the Individual

But this step-by-step erosion of America's fundamental concepts of patriotism, self-reliance, individual dignity, and fiscal responsibility has now reached the point where it threatens the continued existence of our great country as the cornerstone and anchor point of true freedom of opportunity for the individual.

Many of our national leaders have embraced a philosophy which regards the individual as being incapable of dealing directly with the complex problems each one of us faces today. The extent to which government has already assumed responsibility for basic economic requirements has truly weakened individual initiative.

The present economic situation in which this country finds itself today must in substantial degree be charged to the so-called "New Economics" which have drastically influenced government spending and "managed" basic fiscal policy for the last 10 years. It is almost impossible today to find in a top level financial advisory capacity of our national government men who believe a debt is a debt and that a permanent program of spending above income will bring disaster to an individual, a family, a company, or a government. In our national leadership councils practical men of experience have been replaced by theoretical, academic types. They operate under a far different economic and political philosophy from that which prevailed as the basis for this nation becoming the strongest country in the long history of the world. Their philosophy does not countenance such things as balanced budgets and debt retirement. These unprincipled economists rationalize that "it makes no difference about the size of the debt because we owe it to ourselves." Nevertheless continued deficit spending by the national government has brought inflation, and none of their rationalizing can deny the fact that the American dollar has lost about 60 per cent of its buying power since 1940 – and appears destined to lose more.

Ladies can rebel, protest, demonstrate, picket, and boycott the grocery stores – congressmen can order investigations – but the real culprit is the "New Economics" of

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government. Some of these economists call it a "Government Managed Economy" and others call it a "Government Controlled Economy." Whether managed or controlled, they have made a mess of the financial affairs of this country from the towering Federal debt of approximately $350 billion and the swiftly rising cost of living to the deficit in our international "Balance of Payments" and the diminishing of the treasury of gold at Fort Knox.

Back to First Principles

We are at a critical point in history. On the one hand, dramatic and fast changing advances in technology and science offer miraculous opportunities to improve the creative level of mankind. On the other hand, the violence, the license, the financial and moral irresponsibility which infest our land have caused great divisions among our people. Do we have the emotional stability as a people to reject the damaging and negative tendencies of our society in order to properly and fully utilize the opportunities that scientific advancement holds before us?

There are those who contend that old-fashioned creeds, the principles of our forefathers, the founding philosophies of this country's early days are now outmoded and inapplicable to this computerized age of space and science. Our schools have been instructed to refrain from teaching our children the power and glory of prayer. We have successfully and shamefully defended in court our children's right to ignore the salute to the flag. Groups are hard at work trying to abolish Christmas and Easter programs in schools – eliminate Thanksgiving Day and Presidential proclamations of prayer – even working to remove chaplains from our Armed Forces.

I reject these contentions and all of this nonsense. I don't believe that we can comfortably take pride in the scientific and technological advances of the day amidst the immorality, irreverence, irresponsibility, and violence which exists in such volume in our society today.

Toward a Solution

What can we do about it?

There is no quick and easy solution. But we can make a start by taking our heads out of the ground and recognizing the growing crisis around us for what it is. We can start as individuals by abandoning the philosophy of noninvolvement in matters of public interest – an attitude which too many of us have embraced in recent years. We must be willing to accept our citizenship responsibili-

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ties. We must choose our national leaders with more care and caution.

We can start relearning the art of self-discipline – and insisting that all elements within our society learn it, also.

We must relearn and teach others that – in the common idiom – "there's no such thing as a free lunch."

Our American society was based on a system of earned rewards and earned punishments. There is no place in our society for either rewards or punishments that are not earned.

We must learn to call things by their right names. Violence is violence – no matter what the cause in which it is perpetrated. Violence is a grievous breach of the law and must be treated as such.

Treason is still treason and should be treated as such. Anyone who gives aid and comfort to an enemy of the United States is flirting with the very essence of treason. And this should be true whether that man is a presidential candidate, a Negro minister, or a foreign agent. The same goes for sedition and for all those who preach sedition, who teach it to their students, or who seek to arouse sedition in others by burning their draft cards or defaming and disgracing the American Flag. We must stop coddling the breakers of our laws – making up excuses for them – looking complacently the other way because it is safer and easier to ignore them, or because it is politically expedient to do so.

We have tried the soft approach, and many of us hoped it would make conditions better. This has failed. Conditions have become worse, not better, and they are growing worse with every passing day.

We must grow tougher in our approach and we must tighten our financial belt.

We must rediscover for ourselves – and teach to others – the truth that freedom is inseparable from responsibility. It is a difficult thing to win – freedom; but it is even more difficult to live with it – and still more difficult, we are finding, for the individual to keep it.

A Firm Foundation

Freedom is indivisible. Any so-called freedom that impairs and impedes the legitimate freedom of others is tyranny – whether it be in the form of an all-powerful dictator, or whether it be in the form of an arrogant, oppressive, and bigoted power structure, or whether it be in the form of a violent, lazy, selfish, irreverent, and unpatriotic minority.

History has shown us that great

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advances have been made in civilization where there has been an acceptance of citizenship responsibility by a broad group of people on a grass roots basis. The ancient empires of Rome and Greece, for example, achieved their initial greatness when individual citizens provided advancement in such areas as science, medicine, judicial matters, education, and economic trade. Great cities in which the citizens both took pride and accepted responsibility were the foundation of these empires of the past. However, as the central governments became more and more powerful, the citizenship of the cities and the countryside abdicated their responsibilities to provide for their own progress and welfare to these central governments. Arrogant and improperly motivated but strong central governments resulted and contributed to the eventual crumbling of once great civilizations, leaving only the ruins of once great structures of marble and stone.

We must not let history repeat itself, as it sometimes has a habit of doing. We must learn from the past and realize that preservation of the integrity and dignity of each man as an individual is vital. The only avenue for the preservation of our way of life and its improvement for our fellow men lies not in more reliance upon our central government in Washington, but in the acceptance of citizenship responsibilities at the grass roots level by as many people as can be motivated to do so.

A responsible citizen is one who is aware of the creative nature of man. Of all the creatures that inhabit the earth, man is the only one that is not content to merely exist in his environment. God has given men the mental capacity to alter or change their environment. Our Christian training and background teaches us that this superior ability should be directed toward improving life for our fellow beings on earth. In this sense each one of us has a responsibility to be creative; that is, to make whatever contribution we can as individuals toward maintaining and improving the environment of our society as a whole. Unfortunately, too many of us have been leaving this responsibility to others, or worse still, have been abdicating it to the questionable leadership of a coalition of professional politicians and fogheaded, theoretical economists.

Implementing Good Intentions

I think most of us have good intentions, but we have let ourselves become so preoccupied with our own personal day-to-day problems and pleasures that we have neglected our individual obligation

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for active participation and involvement in those affairs of society as a whole which are shaping the destiny of our country. Good intentions and lofty desires in themselves will not solve the problems that face us today.

The trouble with so many of us is that we are always getting ready to act instead of acting; we are getting ready to participate but never really participate in public affairs.

The psychologist, William Moulton Marston, once asked 3,000 persons this question: *"What have you to live for?"* He was shocked to find out 94 per cent were simply enduring the present while they waited for the future. They were waiting for something to happen, waiting for the children to grow up, waiting for next year. They were waiting for another time to take a long dreamed-about trip, waiting for someone to die, waiting for tomorrow without realizing that all anyone has for certain is today!

The financial mess that we find our country in today, the violence and unrest on the domestic scene, the muddled foreign policy, the soaring crime rate, the disregard for law and order – these things haven't been created overnight. A major trouble is that when these trends started and have progressed, too many of us have been waiting it out – hoping the trends would change – leaving the problem to others.

Each day offers us opportunities and one of life's most precious possessions, time itself. It is a shame to forever lose and waste these most valued elements of our lives by procrastination, while our society moves headlong toward disaster. Resolve on every day of your life to give full attention to the moment right at hand, for life is made up of moments at hand, and only in this way can you live your life to the fullest, and fulfill your responsibilities as a creative citizen.

Conditions are not going to change because we want them to. The only hope for change is for you and me, and thousands of others like us, to start sounding off about matters of public interest. There must be another voice heard besides that of the Black Power mobsters and their intellectual companions. Nobody can do our part, as small as it may be, but you and me! ◈

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CLARENCE B. CARSON

The Rise and Fall of England

8. PAX BRITANNICA

I thank the goodness and the grace
Which on my birth have smiled,
And made me in these Christian days
A happy English child.

English Children's Textbook, 1855

THE WESTERN WORLD enjoyed nearly a hundred years of peace from the Congress of Vienna (1815) to the outbreak of World War I (1914). Indeed, this peace spread over much of the earth, as the impact of European civilization was felt to the far corners of this planet. Of course, the tenor of peace was frequently disturbed by rumors of war, and on occasion hostilities even broke out at some point. Such wars as occurred, however, were usually at the periphery of Europe, or beyond. In the early years there was trouble in Spain and with her American colonies and the hostilities in Greece. In the mid-century, there was the Crimean War to be followed shortly by the most devastating war of the century, the American Civil War. War even came briefly to the European center with the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871. And the tempo of the conflicts picked up toward the close of the era, with the Chino-Japanese War, Russo-Japanese War, the Boer War, the Spanish-American War, and the Balkan Wars.

Nevertheless, peace had become

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the norm and war the exception. Such wars as occurred were usually brief and limited to a particular locale. Threats to the peace were frequently met by a concert of powers to restore accord, such as the ones resulting from the Congress of Verona and the Congress of Berlin. Moreover, institutions and practices for maintaining accord and extending friendly relations among nations were developing apace: respect for nationals in other lands, honoring of treaties, observing diplomatic niceties, respect for territorial boundaries of a country by other nations, and so on. Organizations for promoting peaceful interchange were formed on an international basis increasingly: the International Red Cross (1864), Universal Telegraph Union (1875), Universal Postal Union (1878), a convention for standardized patents (1883), and a convention for uniform copyright laws (1887).[1] The movement for peace reached its peak, in many respects, with the international peace conferences at the Hague in 1899 and 1907. Moreover, sentiment was spreading that wars were an atavistic throwback to our brute past, that civilization was spreading, and that wars might shortly be banished from the earth. In this context, Alfred Tennyson, Poet Laureate of England, did not appear so much to be dreaming in the lines that follow as describing what was shortly to be:

> Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flags were furled
> In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.
> There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
> And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

One history book refers to this ninety-nine years as "The Golden Age of the West." Of the era, the authors say:

> The growth of parliamentarianism accompanied the advance of industrialization. In one country after another representative institutions were established and personal freedoms were recognized, while new libertarian ideals undermined the time-honored theories of royal absolutism. In its hour of triumph the emancipated bourgeoisie extended the suffrage, abolished religious disabilities, ended human bondage, proclaimed freedom of thought, and encouraged a rugged social individualism. Its faith in the beneficent effects of political and economic freedom, moreover, found support in the rising standard of living of the masses. As the advance of technology combined with the progress of science to create an unprecedented physical

[1] Carlton J. H. Hayes, *Contemporary Europe Since 1870* (New York: Macmillan, 1958, rev. ed.), p. 307.

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well-being in the lands of the Occident, the privations and fears which had haunted mankind throughout its history began to recede.[2]

The peace that prevailed generally from the Congress of Vienna until World War I can justly be called the Peace of Britain. During these years Britain was the leading nation in the world. Carlton J. H. Hayes has said, "Right through the nineteenth century and until the world wars of the twentieth, Great Britain enjoyed a preeminence among the nations comparable with that of Spain in the sixteenth century or of France in the seventeenth."[3] His comparisons understate the case. Britain's pre-eminence in the nineteenth century should be compared with that of France in the High Middle Ages, with Rome at the height of empire, with Athens in Greece during the classical age. That is, Britain was leader at the time of the flowering of the West.

A Different Source of Strength

But while Britain's leadership resembled that of Rome in that it came at the peak of a civilization, it was unlike Rome in very important ways. Rome's pre-eminence came by conquest and empire. Britain had an empire throughout, but it was not the source of her greatness. Rome's might was in the force of the Roman legions. Britain never had more than a tiny army by the standards of the age, and even her vaunted navy was not usually an instrument of conquest. Britain's greatness did not stem from her empire nor have its greatest effect in the navy that ruled the seas.

There was a time when Britain's rulers sought greatness by way of conquest and empire. Indeed, they did so off and on for more than two centuries. Britain's pre-eminence was an amazing phenomenon, considering the small physical base for such greatness and the historical remoteness of England from the centers of civilization, but it did not come overnight. England's thrust to become a world power began during the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), when an augmented navy began to contest with other countries. The navy consolidated its arrival to great power status by the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Thereafter, the appurtenances of England began to appear on distant continents, ever more prominently. Successful colonization began in the Americas in the early seventeenth century. During that century British naval

[2] Chester G. Starr, *et. al.*, *A History of the World*, II (Chicago, Rand McNally, 1960), p. 337.

[3] Hayes, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

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power contested with that other great naval power, Holland, and was generally successful. There followed a number of major wars involving England and France, among others, in the late seventeenth and throughout much of the eighteenth centuries. So far as the thrust to eminence by way of conquest and empire by England was concerned, these wars reached their culmination with the Treaty of Paris (1763) which ended the Seven Year's War (known in America as the French and Indian War). By the terms of this treaty England acquired or consolidated its hold upon a vast and extensive empire: all of North America east of the Mississippi as well as the vast area of Canada. These were in addition to other colonial holdings acquired over the years.

Open for Business

But the imperial greatness of England was short-lived. The old English continental American colonies revolted in the 1770's, and were able with the aid of France to effect their independence. In that conflict, however, Britain faced not only a Franco-American Alliance but also a hostile Spain and a League of Armed Neutrality of northern European powers. At yet another Treaty of Paris (1783), Britain was divested of the choicest of her colonial possessions. Though the monarch retained some colonial possessions, these ceased generally to be conceived of as sources of wealth and power. Indeed, for perhaps two-thirds of the nineteenth century Englishmen were given to thinking of colonies as a burden and responsibility rather than any considerable advantage. One historian notes that "most Victorian statesmen as well as spokesmen of the Manchester School professed a distaste for 'Empire' and talked of colonies as a 'millstone round our necks. . . .'"[4]

At any rate, at the moment of the nadir of imperial prestige in 1783, England was set on a new road to greatness. The industrial surge occurred most dramatically in the 1780's, and may well have been spurred by British ingenuity turned away from the exploitation of colonies to constructive industrial pursuits. Increasingly thereafter, Englishmen sought markets instead of empire, conversion instead of conquest, free trade instead of protection, and production rather than restriction. This became emphatically so after the Napoleonic Wars. The stage had been set for England to pursue this course with developments in

[4] Asa Briggs, *The Age of Improvement* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1959), p. 385.

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ideas, with limitations on government, with liberty and property secure, and with a people morally revived.

The Peace of Britain

The age of England's greatness has been variously described: for Europe and America generally it was the Age of Liberalism and Nationalism; for England much of it is comprehended in the reign of Victoria (1837-1901), and is known as the Victorian Era; in foreign affairs the spirit is best captured by calling it the Palmerston Era; in economic terms, England became the Workshop of the World, the World's Shipper, and London the World's Banker. To sum it all up in its most impressive aspect, it was the age of the *Pax Britannica.*

England's leadership was most obvious and demonstrable in the commercial realm. Industrialization had taken place there first on a large scale. English productivity and commercial activity continued apace in the nineteenth century, though it need only be alluded to here. As Lipson says, "In the nineteenth century she stood pre-eminent as the leading commercial nation on the face of the globe, as the possessor of the largest mercantile marine, and as the universal banker, insurance and commission agent. . . . Her surplus wealth fertilized the barren places of the earth and promoted material progress in backward lands."[5] No doubt, it was this commercial superiority which made England so imitable and influential. But we must look elsewhere to discover why the nineteenth century should be called the Peace of Britain. Commerce was more of a consequence than a cause of this.

It was the Peace of Britain because England followed the ways of peace generally during the period, was imitated by other nations, and influential upon them in ways that made for peace. What makes for peace, we may gather from this experience, is stable and limited government, the counterbalancing of power both domestic and foreign, free trade and the turning of the energies of peoples to constructive pursuits, inhibitions upon trespassing either upon individuals or upon nations, and a humane ethos. It was in these areas, at least, that England's influence was so great and effective.

A Shining Example

Britain's influence was subtly exercised upon much of the rest of the world in ways that made for peace by the example of its form of government. Peoples tend

[5] E. Lipson, *The Growth of English Society* (London: A. and C. Black, 1959), p. 332.

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to imitate what they reckon to be successful. They imitated Britain's industrialization because of its obvious success in productivity. In like manner, they tended to adopt and adapt to themselves the outlines of Britain's system of government. One historian declares that "most peoples abroad looked upon Britain as the exemplar of what was highest and best in political achievement . . . ," that the British system "was consciously copied, in full or in part, by almost every country of western and central Europe. . . ."[6]

The reason for this is not hard to find. There was a great thrust toward liberty in Europe in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the impetus to which would eventually spread to the rest of the world. The massive push in this direction was made first in the French Revolution and associated events. It was an abortive undertaking. Instead of liberty and fraternity the French Revolution produced disorder, violent and destructive divisions, and eventuated in a new absolutism which made the ones it was supposed to supplant pale by comparison.

Stability and Balance

Amidst the turmoil of these years, England retained its form of government, its stability, and even a modicum of prosperity. Not only that, but England fought a long war against France and what that country had come to represent. Such repressions as were adopted in England to forestall revolutionary subversion were generally mild. Of equal importance is the fact that when the other victors in the Napoleonic Wars turned to unmitigated reaction (circa 1815-1830), Britain frequently stood for liberty and against the excesses of repression associated with the reaction. It began to appear that England had found a way to liberty without revolution, "the means of peacefully reconciling liberty and authority, monarchical and constitutional government, aristocracy and democracy."[7]

England had a stable and balanced government within whose framework an extensive liberty existed in the nineteenth century. The key idea for describing the government was balance, a balance in the House of Commons between the landed gentry and the townsmen (made more effective by the Reform Bill of 1832), a balance between the elected house and the hereditary house in Parliament, a balance between the prerogatives of the Crown and the powers of Parliament, a balance between the

[6] Hayes, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 80.

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parties, as Liberals and Conservatives alternated frequently in organizing governments after 1830. It was almost typical that most of the thrust to free trade should be accomplished under a Conservative Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, though the ideological impetus to it came from the Liberals.

A Heritage of Freedom

The central features of the English government were a separation and counterbalancing of powers, a limited monarchy, constitutional restrictions on the executive power, initiation of money bills in the elected house, cabinet government with ministerial responsibility to the Parliament (but whose head was chosen by the monarch), and the separation of powers. Governments imitating Britain could and did abstract these and combine them in various ways, hopefully suiting them to their own experience. Indeed, if they did not fit them into their own heritage and tradition there would be missing what was probably the most important aspect of the British example, for the British had shown that it was possible to attain liberty within a framework of inherited institutions.

The first foreign imitation of the British form of government, and possibly the most imaginative adaptation, was that of the United States of America in the eighteenth century. True, the United States abandoned monarchy, but it kept the form and much of the function in an elected president. Nor did Americans adopt a cabinet system. Otherwise, the imitation was obvious, a two-house legislature, the separation and counterbalancing of powers, limitations on government power in a constitution which went beyond the limitations of the British, initiation of money bills in the more democratic house, and so on. In addition, the Americans kept from their English heritage trial by jury, the common law, and the right to a writ of *habeas corpus*. Moreover, they fitted this into their own history of colonial experience by keeping the states within a federal system.

Many other countries were to follow the British example in rearranging their governments in the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. As provinces broke away from old empires to form nation-states or as other provinces were linked together in nation-states these were apt to imitate England. Of Belgium, Hayes says: "The liberal constitutional monarchy which had been instituted in 1831 in conscious imitation of the British — with a King who reigned but did not rule, with a

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bicameral parliament representing the upper and middle classes and making the laws, and with a cabinet of ministers conducting the administration and responsible to the parliamentary majority —this regime actually functioned more nearly like the British than did any of the other governmental systems which Continental nations copied from the 'mother of parliaments.' "[8] When the kingdom of Italy was formed in 1871 it "represented a continuation and extension of the Sardinian constitutional regime which had been copied from Great Britain's. . . ."[9]

Other nations were to follow this example more or less closely: Denmark, Norway, Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, and, of course, the self-governing provinces or dominions within the British Empire, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and so forth. Indeed, any land that had a cabinet system of government in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had derived it from the British model. The full extent of this influence is brought out by an event such as the promulgation of a constitution in Japan in 1869. While it is said to have been modeled upon the German system, the debt to the British appears in this description. The "constitution, besides assuring the authority of the emperor, provided for a cabinet and a two-house legislature consisting of a Chamber of Peers and a House of Representatives elected by Japanese males of suitable property qualifications."[10]

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 107.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 125.

Trade Barriers Removed

British free trade policies influenced other lands in that direction as well. The British had taken the lead in trying to remove mercantilistic restrictions. "In fact, commercial men in London signed a petition for free trade in 1820 and William Huskisson, who was President of the Board of Trade . . . , from 1823 to 1827 worked arduously for the abolition of the worst impediments to trade."[11]

Such arguments from successful British businessmen plus the actual reduction of tariffs by the government made a considerable impression elsewhere. "In fact, in the United States tariff rates were lowered steadily from 1833 to the War between the States. . . . The Netherlands virtually abolished customs duties from 1845 to 1877. Belgium greatly reduced its rates after 1851, and Sardinia did away with excessive forms of protection under the leadership of its great

[10] Starr, *et. al., op. cit.*, II, 449.

[11] Shepard B. Clough, *European Economic History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968, 2nd ed.), p. 356.

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statesman, Count Cavour." An Anglo-French treaty was worked out in 1860 which lowered rates, and thereafter both countries worked out similar treaties with other countries. By way of "a network of most-favored-nation clause treaties, the lowest rates which Western culture had ever known became generalized."[12]

A Balance of Powers

Britain's foreign policy for much of the century is the most direct reason for calling the peace that generally prevailed the *Pax Britannica*. Just as balance was the key to the greatly admired and imitated English government, so was balance the key to a very effective foreign policy. There were several facets to this policy, however. In the first place, England's foreign policy makers maintained a rigorous independence of other powers. Of the Viscount Castlereagh, the great British statesman at the time of the Congress of Vienna, one historian says that he "refused to identify Britain too closely with the policies of the European powers. . . . He resisted Russian attempts to convert the congress system into a means of imposing a programme of concerted anti-revolutionary intervention. . . ."[13] When a concert of powers approved intervention in Spain in the 1820's, George Canning, his successor, "announced that Britain would in no circumstance permit the permanent military occupation of Spain, the violation of Portuguese territory, or the appropriation of any part of the Spanish American colonies."[14] Indeed, Canning had proposed a joint British-American declaration at the time that the President of the United States set forth the Monroe Doctrine.

On the other hand, Britain generally did what it could to advance constitutional regimes. Lord Palmerston, whose hand usually guided English foreign policy in the mid-decades of the nineteenth century, was most outspoken in this regard. He told the House of Commons in 1832 that "the independence of constitutional States . . . never can be a matter of indifference to the British Parliament, or, I should hope, to the British public. Constitutional States I consider to be the natural Allies of this country." He was to show that he meant this in regard to Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, and so on.[15]

Britain did, of course, participate actively in international affairs. Her representatives sat in the great congresses and helped to

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 358.
[13] Briggs, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-46.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 347.
[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 351-52.

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arrive at common decisions on occasion. Britain made treaties with other lands, engaged in diplomatic niceties, and protected her nationals abroad. But the most direct and important participation was in attempting to maintain a balance of power, a balance of powers on the continent and in western Europe, a balance between the powers of the East and the West. As the author of one of the volumes in the Oxford History says, "To the statesmen of the nineteenth century the balance of power meant an equilibrium or ratio between states or groups of states, a ratio established in due form by treaty settlement, affirmed by public declaration and giving to each state, or group of states, a position based upon a rough assessment of its material and moral strength."

It was in establishing such a balance of powers that Britain's independence was so important. "Great Britain could not dictate to the powers of Europe the policy which seemed most favourable to the peace of the Continent; she could always throw her wealth and influence into the scale against any Power or combination of Powers likely to disturb the existing equipoise."[16] So it was that Britain would intervene in the Crimea to throw her weight against Russia, would counteract the weight of France in Spain, would favor the Greeks against the Turks, and so on. It should be noted, too, that for much of the century Britain's weight was used in opposition to territorial expansion and in favor of trade being open to all countries, particularly England, of course.

Humane Reforms

England's leadership was so general in the nineteenth century that examples only can be given. One major impact was in the spread of humanitarian ideas and the advancing of humane measures. Within England itself, there were notable humane reforms. The penal code was revised to eliminate the death penalty for numerous offenses. This did not indicate less concern for protecting property, though many of the penalties reduced were for such things as stealing and picking pockets, for a police force was authorized to supplement penalties with surveillance. Attempts were made also at prison reform.

Under the humanitarian animus, efforts were made at providing education for poor children, some factory legislation was passed, and reforms were made in caring for the sick under Poor Law care.

[16] Llewellyn Woodward, *The Age of Reform* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962, 2nd ed.), pp. 193-94.

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The humanitarian interest spread to concern with peoples in the colonies and those in far away places. Missionaries went forth in large numbers from England to many places in the world to bring not only Christianity but the peculiarly humanitarian application of it in the nineteenth century.

Englishmen acting for their government frequently introduced humane reforms in lands that they administered. The increasing intrusion of the British into India in the course of the century brought many western reforms to that exotic land. "Reform meant the destruction of criminal bands and the gradual establishment of an unprecedented degree of law and order over much of India.... Reform meant also the abolition of a number of traditional Hindu customs such as female infanticide, *suttee*, and *thuggee*.[17] The British took the leadership generally in abolishing the slave trade, in seeing to the abolition of slavery in their colonies, and in attempting to stop the international slave trade.

The Greatness of England Found in Her People

England's greatness, such as it was, was in the final analysis the greatness of her people. Certainly, the great men of Britain's age of greatness should be credited with much of the nation's influence upon and prestige around the world. Britain's statesmen stood out above those of other nations and generally took the lead in the international conferences: the Duke of Wellington, the Viscount Castlereagh, George Canning, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmerston, William Gladstone, Benjamin Disraeli, and many, many others. It was fitting, too, that Queen Victoria, that doughty, highly moral, and dignified lady should reign during so much of this epoch.

But statesmanship was only one facet of this leadership. British philosophy had been on the rise since the seventeenth century with Bacon, Locke, and Newton, would play a major role in the eighteenth century with David Hume, and would be adorned in the nineteenth century by Spencer, Mill, and Bradley. Economics was almost a British invention, and certainly its development as a science owes most to Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Thomas Malthus, John Stuart Mill, Jeremy Bentham, and Stanley Jevons. Probably the major work of Edmund Burke should be called sociological; in any case, his conservative philosophy made a deep imprint on political thought in the era that followed.

[17] Walter L. Arnstein, *Britain: Yesterday and Today* (Boston: Heath, 1966), p. 105.

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British scientific leadership was already well established before the nineteenth century, with the work of Newton, Boyle, Harvey, Halley, and so forth. But later scientists left as great an impact: Charles Darwin more than any other, but in chemistry there were Davy and Faraday, in geology Charles Lyell, and that jack-of-all-trades scientist, T. H. Huxley. The British excelled in literature more than the other arts, and the century is filled with illustrious poets, novelists, essayists, and historians: Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Byron, Dickens, Carlyle, Macaulay, Buckle, the Brownings, Thackeray, the Brontë sisters, Ruskin, Arnold, and others. Even Karl Marx sought out the freedom of Victorian England from which he was to poison the intellectual air and bend the minds of men toward totalitarianism.

The nineteenth century was truly a Golden Age, if man ever had such. Hope abounded, and improvements appeared to be occurring in every direction. And England was surely the center of it from which radiated so much that made for peace. The symbol of England's greatness was the navy, but with equal aptness it should have been or included the merchant marine. The ships that plied the seas from their home base in the tight little isle carried not only the abounding goods of a productive nation but statesmen, thinkers, ideas, and men confident in the superiority of their ways and institutions to teach others in the arts of peace. ◈

The next chapter of this series pertains to "The Workshop of the World."

Liberty and Peace

VIOLATION of liberty, and nothing else, is the basic cause of conflict. The violation of liberty may affect either the person or his property; it may be in the form of either a loss of liberty or the threat of a loss, real or imagined. Under any of these conditions, man's will to be free impels him to strike at that force which is infringing on his liberty or threatening to do so.

F. A. HARPER, *Liberty: A Path to Its Recovery*

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Let's Justify FREEDOM

LARRY ARNHART

THE ROAD to socialism is paved with noble words. Every extension of state control flourishes in the public mind in proportion to the adjectives pinned on it. Libertarians, by contrast, have been the "realists," tending to shun pompous language in their argumentation. This characteristic is a virtue, but it can be an unnecessary hindrance. Libertarianism is dynamic, and it should be supported with the enthusiastic rhetoric it deserves. Libertarians stress freedom, and properly so, but they have neglected corollary ideals long monopolized by the collectivists. One of them is the concept of justice.

No other philosophy has a more valid claim to justice than libertarianism. Yet most of the interventionist nostrums have been proposed in the name of this ideal. Government has regulated prices, wages, farm production, electric power, and rat control to cure "injustice." It is time that individualists clarify and reclaim justice as a basic concept of the free society.

The classical definition of justice was submitted by Plato. In Book IV of his *Republic*, he asserted justice to be "everyone doing his own work, and not being a busybody . . . ," and he added that each should receive his proper reward. Each should perform his *own* work and receive his *own* reward. Thus justice was not equality, though each should have equal access to justice. As Edmund Burke explained, "all men have equal rights; but not to equal things." This was not merely a principle for privileged elites. It did demand special rewards when they were earned, but the proper reward for some was a humble and quiet life. A simple peasant could find happiness without ostentation or material riches. The common goal was that each man be himself.

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What Is Justice?

Philosophers have established various types of justice. The most misunderstood has been distributive justice. Egalitarians have interpreted this as state redistribution; but Book V of his *Nicomachean Ethics* contains Aristotle's observation:

> Distributive justice, which deals with common property, always follows the rule of proportion we have described. When, for instance, distribution is made to two or more people out of a common fund, it will be in accordance with the ratio of the contributions which they have severally made to that fund.

Would today's social planners distribute government appropriations proportionate to each taxpayer's donation? To those who remain convinced that redistribution from rich to poor is just, Aristotle would answer, "If it were, all the acts of a tyrant must of necessity be just; for he only coerces other men by superior power, just as the multitude coerce the rich."

State redistribution rests on the premise that government largesse and social justice are synonymous. They are not. Those championing justice as the sole purpose of the state have usually been adamant in excluding philanthropy as a governmental pursuit. How can a state redistribute private wealth while allowing everyone to do his own work and receive his own reward? A just state is a noninterventionist state. A government can plan the affairs of its citizens, or it can be just by restricting itself to those duties necessary for preserving order. To those who visualize a state both philanthropic and just, Bastiat would warn, "These two uses of the law are in direct contradiction to each other. We must choose between them. A citizen cannot at the same time be free and not free."

The state planner would respond that citizens can be both free and not free. At least they must yield some freedom to the state so that they might be "free" from hunger, unemployment, poor housing, inadequate education, and other such ills. In freeing its people from these "injustices," the planner believes, the welfare state promotes freedom as well as justice. The libertarian replies that this same reasoning could excuse any slavery as long as the slaves were economically secure. As George Santayana retorted, the collectivists talk of freeing the people, "but of freeing the people from what? From the consequences of freedom."

While Plato and Aristotle formulated their ideas of justice, multitudes were starving. Even

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more lived in ignorance, eking out a living through crude skills. Today a few nations are more advanced, but the ancient afflictions remain. The just state acknowledges these conditions, while accepting man and not the state as the appropriate agent for wrestling these problems. Since the state can produce nothing but force, it helps best by maintaining a just order. Man remains under the restrictions of nature and circumstance, but under political freedom he can struggle for new achievement and find satisfaction in his struggle. The just man does not expect immunity from the pains of life; he only asks government to refrain from adding to his distress.

The Libertarian Ideal

The first element of justice is the negative role of government, and the second is the positive role of the just individual. Each man is to do his own work; and each man, as he orders his own life without infringing on others, is just. This is the affirmation of the unique individual; it is the right to be oneself. Private property and economic competition allow man to pursue his material interests and receive what is due him from the free market, but libertarians know that this is only one side of his nature.

A productive economy is a useful tool. But few are those who would deem it an end in itself, even if it is essential to most other ends. An enterprising entrepreneur may discover an innovation to increase his workers' productivity and permit a shorter work week. His employees may then satisfy their interests in philosophy, art, music, or whatever their natures dictate. But until an efficient economy raises them from mere subsistence, their lives must be narrow and their freedom limited. Economic efficiency, though, will come from just individuals, not an unjust state.

Justice must be restored to its proper meaning. The equation of social justice and government philanthrophy is a blatant distortion. Compulsory redistribution by government in the name of social welfare is neither just nor charitable. Political promises to free the people from their maladies are equally false. Both of these sophisms would exchange genuine justice for an illusory substitute. The legitimate duties of the state are still summed up as justice – allowing each man to do his own work. This is the libertarian ideal. Let us propagate it and return justice to the lexicon of freedom. ◈

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Each on His Own WHITE CHARGER

EARL ZARBIN

SOMEONE to set our troubled world aright! Someone else, that is! Not me! I'm overwhelmed by the difficulties. Who am I to cause an end to racial injustice, to rejuvenate the cities, to diminish crime, to end the war in Vietnam, to lower taxes, to replace poverty with wealth? Me? How can I do all of these? Obviously, *I* can't, but there has to be *someone* who can!

How often have we heard that thought expressed. Not in just that way, perhaps, but something like it. James Reston recently said in the *New York Times*, "The American conscience is not quiet these days. It would like to be eased by some *political savior*...." Holmes Alexander, in his column, wrote, "Somewhere along the road ahead we must find a turning, or *find a leader* to perform some miracle of rejuvenation." (Emphasis supplied)

What is necessary, in their view, and in the view of millions like them, is for a man on a white charger to come bounding onto the scene. They want someone in whom they can put their faith, behind whom to unite. They want him to issue instructions, to transform the unthinking, to wave a lance and thereby imbue all around him with their idea of right thinking.

But there's the catch: to imbue all around him with *their* idea of right thinking! Little chance of their agreeing among themselves, aside from their universal desire to create a utopia and to have someone else – if they are not picked – lead the way. This doesn't stop them, though. What they want *now* is the messiah. They can quarrel about substance later.

There is, of course, no end to the list of men ready to take on the role of the Glorious Knight. Even a semi-Glorious Knight would do: just someone, somewhere (within the democratic tradition, naturally) to rescue us

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from ourselves and set us on the loving path of brotherhood and righteousness.

This is the wish, but it is also the defect; for there is no one person capable of doing what they want. There are, however, millions of persons who individually can mount their own white chargers. They can do this by insisting upon right thinking and right action for themselves. Thus, each can be his own man on a white charger. If each does this, there will be no need for a "political savior," no need to "find a leader." Each person would be a savior and leader in his own right, for he would have saved himself.

We may understand and admit that this condition is unlikely to occur very soon. But, unless each mounts his own white charger – if men insist on finding a savior instead of doing what is right themselves – the goal of freedom in all areas of our lives will be impossible of achievement.

If our troubled world is to be set aright, it is to be done by ourselves, by each of us setting himself aright. ◈

CORRECTION: The review of William Rusher's *Special Counsel* (Arlington House, 1968) in the September 1968 FREEMAN erroneously listed the price at $10.00. The correct price is $6.00.

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